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*SOME THINGS WORTH WHILE IN THEOLOGY*¹

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I

The first step into clearness in the bewildering total of the subjects of theological science would seem to be an agreement concerning the true perspective of faith. In some way or other the world of religious thought needs to be ordered in different degrees of worth. Some scheme involving a gradation of rank, valid for the religious human being, should be imposed upon the objects of religious concern. Relativity is the law of our being,—not the relativity which excludes, but that which is contained in, the absolute, as the planet in infinite space; and a deep and sure grasp of this law would seem to be of the utmost moment in theology. The story is told that Francis W. Newman, the radical, made a journey from London to Birmingham to discuss the profounder issues of religious belief with his brother, John Henry Newman, the Catholic; and when the question arose as to the axiom from which debate should begin, the Catholic proposed to the radical as the surest principle of faith the infallibility of the Pope. This story has, if not literal, at least symbolic truth. It serves admirably as an illustration of Cardinal Newman's sense of the perplexity and contradiction of his time, and his fine irony. It is almost needless to add that, while men are thus at variance concerning the relative security and value of the different interests of Christian faith, discussion can be nothing but a discipline in confusion.

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Doubtless it would be worth while to know everything that exists, whether as fact or force or idea, if one had mind enough and time enough for the task. We figure that in the divine intellect all being and all phases of being find perfect reflection. We cannot, however, bring ourselves to believe that even for the divine intellect one thing is as important as another. It may be difficult, perhaps impossible, to make out the perspective of values in the vision of God, but it can hardly be doubted that for him there exists some perspective. Nothing is more impressive in the teaching of Jesus than his representation of the eternal perspective: "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father. . . . Fear not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows."—"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" According to this teaching, while all things are known to God, all things have not the same worth for God; for him there is substance and accident, essential and incidental, temporal and eternal.

As matter of fact, perspective rules the lives of men. The world is shaped for each man according to his dominant interest. The chief object in the human landscape with the barber is the hair of his fellow-men, with the bootblack it is the feet. The special scholar is a person with a special perspective of values; it may be Greek, classic, Hellenistic, ecclesiastic; it may be Hebrew or Aramaic or Syriac, or any one of a large number of antique tongues; it may be research in any one of a score of different lines; in each case the world is shaped into important and unimportant by the special interest. The elective system is grounded upon two necessities; first, upon the necessity for division of labor, and second upon the necessity for freedom in determining this division. The world of knowledge is too big for the individual scholar or scientist. Bacon's boast that he took all knowledge for his province was vain even in his day; it would be a sign of insanity in ours. Bacon did nothing for

his province in ethics, in political theory, in metaphysics, or in the philosophy of religion. He stands simply as a great prophet of the coming glory of natural science; as such he has a definite and limited outlook upon reality.

The mere fact of perspective does not help us much. Nor do we gain very much in clearness when we note that perspective is determined partly by capacity and partly by environment. The ideal physician has an outlook upon life that has arisen from native force and opportunity. Capacity and call, in a way, fix the perspective of mankind; and the capacities being many and the calls different, the perspective becomes a vast aggregate of contrasts. So far relativity would seem to reduce all value to mere like and dislike working through the call and the prohibition of society. It would appear to be impossible to escape this issue unless we are willing to go deeper and stand upon the universal capacity of man as a human being, and upon the universal call of duty. Below all special capacities is the universal humanity; below all the separate callings is the undivided summons to quit ourselves like men.

Religion generates this just perspective because religion founds it upon the universal capacity and the universal call. Religion lives in the heavenly vision and obedience thereto. In the courses of this obedience the perspective is purified and extended, as with this obedience the new perspective was introduced. When Paul said, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision," he there and then changed the perspective of his life; Jesus of Nazareth, who had been the object of his enmity, then became his Master. We hear further of this perspective in these words: "What things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ"; still again, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things have passed away, all things have become new." Religion begins in the vision of the moral ideal as the image of God's will for man; the resolve to become the servant of the moral ideal puts one on a new earth and under a new heaven; it does this with all religious souls. It therefore opens up one general perspective; and the basis of this one general perspective is, as I have said, the universal capacity and call.

From the life of the soul in God there arises when unhindered the normal perspective of faith. The trouble is that this normal perspective in the ideas and beliefs of religious men is so often suppressed. Our attitude toward the Bible may serve as an example. The old theory of the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures was an error in sound human perspective. It made of equal importance all parts of the Bible because all stood in an equal infallibility. The modern method of research is wanting in perspective. All parts of the Bible are equally questionable because all share in a common uncertainty. Besides, the truth of research has thrown into shadow the truth of religious intuition. The ensign of Scotland is a lion rampant on a field of blood. That ensign hardly tells the truth about the heroic, but peace-loving, people of Scotland. Modern discussion about the Bible presents the historical scholar rampant on a field of waste and ruin; and thus it has come to pass that the Bible as the witness to the Eternal has suffered that last woe of greatness, it has been taken for granted.

Since the Bible has its chief value as a witness to the Eternal, the approach to what is central in that witness, whether historical or human, should be in the vision of sound perspective. The approach should be like that to Zermatt along the valley of the Visp. There is tumult and wild beauty all along the way. When, however, one gets to Zermatt, still more when one ascends to the Riffel Alp or the Gorner Grat, a new and grander perspective has replaced the old, and in the centre of the vista towers the mighty obelisk of the Matterhorn. It is useless to cry that this is not all; it is all the traveller thinks worth while; at all events, it is better worth while than anything else.

There is a similar ascent in the Bible through historical research and through ideas of worth to that which is central and supreme. There is the rich humanity of Genesis, the stormy epic of the Exodus, the roll of great oratory in the Deuteronomy, the barbaric magnificence of Joshua and Judges, the sign of growing civilization in the records of the kingdom, the interior depth of the Psalms; there are the piety, speculative daring, and world-sympathy of Job, the moral theism and the moral humanism of the prophets. All along the advance the scenery is great. Still,

when one comes to the elevation from which the sublime figure of Jesus is visible, it is seen to be central, and to call at once for a new perspective of values.

So we judge concerning the very numerous beliefs of Christian people. The apostle tells us that all flesh is not the same flesh, that one star differs from another star in glory. All faith is not the same faith; there is a faith in the relatively unimportant and there is a faith in the central and supreme. The jumble of interests and values that one so often sees, as if all were of equal moment and worth, is a sign of the uneducated intellect and the unenlightened conscience. The men who contend for apostolical succession with as much zeal as they do for the permanence of the prophetic mind, who fight for ritual as uncompromisingly as for the morality of the Sermon on the Mount, who are as sure of the miracles of the Lord as they are of his love, who are unable to discern between beliefs about Jesus and the reality of his Person working through conceptions clearly inadequate, who refuse to judge between the temporal and the eternal, who believe in the coming of the Holy Ghost and yet leave little or nothing for him to do beyond giving his sanction to the arrested intellect of the church, who will not subordinate the ends of the ecclesiastic and the traditionalist to the ideals of the Christian thinker and man, are not "walking in the light," but in the night of which Hegel wrote, in which "all the cows are black."

II

Next to just perspective in the values of faith, I should place insight into the society of persons in our world and in our universe. For the Christian thinker the last word about the nature of our human world would appear to be that it is a society of persons; the final thought about the eternal world would seem to be that it too is a society of persons or spirits. The ultimate wisdom concerning the universe is that its substance is in souls. All else is accident, mode, temporal form; the truth of our universe lies in what I have elsewhere called a republic of souls.

If we look into the gospels, we shall find this statement confirmed in every part and in its full intention and scope. In the

message of Jesus the first emphasis is on God the eternal soul: "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done as in heaven so in earth." "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." This emphasis is final and sovereign in the teaching of Jesus. God the Father of men is the indispensable background of his life; without the soul of the Eternal the soul of Jesus would be an enigma, and his career meaningless and vain. When we cease to put the sovereign emphasis where Jesus put that emphasis, however orthodox we may appear to be, we part company with him.

At this point the Unitarian and the Trinitarian traditions naturally correct and strengthen each other. Frederic Denison Maurice learned from his inheritance of faith that this emphasis upon the fatherhood of God was the strength of the old Unitarianism; he learned from the rich and sober Trinitarianism into which his inherited faith grew that the revealing, mediatorial, reconciling soul of Jesus Christ became the supreme single assurance of the fatherhood of God. When Unitarianism and Trinitarianism are reduced to two great lines of testimony to the reality of souls, we see new possibilities of service in them, each to the other; how Unitarianism may plead for the aboriginal soul, and how Trinitarianism, as one of its merits, may renew the vision of God in the vision of Jesus Christ.

The second line of emphasis in the gospels, and in the entire New Testament, is upon the soul of the Lord. He is at the heart of his religion. The significance of his soul is bound up on the one side with the character of God, and on the other with the moral being and value of Man. The immediate interest of the New Testament is as an introduction to the soul of Jesus Christ, as its ultimate interest is as an introduction to God the Father. It is a symbol of the soul of the Lord, a reflection thereof, a way of approach to him, an elevation from which he may be seen. Questions of criticism, textual or historical, the apparatus of the scholar and his entire achievement, are means to this end. If we are serious, and if we know what we are about, we seek through the purified and authentic record the vision of the soul of the Master.

The third line of emphasis in the message of Jesus is on the souls of men. For Jesus these are the only ultimate realities: the soul of the Eternal Father, the soul of his Son and Prophet Christ, and the souls of men. These souls constitute the substance of all worlds, visible and invisible, so far as we are able to judge. All outside moral personality is accident, mode, temporal form, the mere field or camping-ground for the discipline of soul. For obvious reasons the idealistic philosophy of the world must always appear to be the friend of Christianity. It divides the world and the universe into two parts; it reduces them to the abiding and the fleeting; it describes the abiding as persons or under some aspect of personality; it holds as fleeting all things that fall below moral being. The universe comes before the sense as material reality, beautiful to the eye, full of melody to the ear, substantial to touch, and at the farthest remove from soul, older than soul, underlying it, determining its fate. This same universe comes before reason in its analytic and constructive might, and at once its beauty and melody are seen to be forms of man's experience; its substance dissolves into force, force becomes spirit, and that which at first appeared to be the final antithesis of soul is now apprehended as the singular and impressive appeal to the soul of man from the soul of God. This is the idealistic analysis which no enemy can long resist. When moral personality is accentuated through a vast and precious experience, with all its misgivings, it knows itself as the worthiest and the most enduring force in our world; thence it moves to a confident and compassionate view of all souls; thence to the sublime Master and Bishop of souls, and through him to the moral being of God, to the soul of our Father in heaven.

From this position the entire world of sense and time becomes the sacrament of soul. Berkeley is right about the world as it lives in the senses; it is the incessant and ordered speech of the Infinite Spirit to the spirit in man. Trade, art, science, government, philosophy, religion, and all records of religion are but sacraments of the soul of man with the soul of his brother, or between the soul of man and the soul of God. Everywhere soul is the reality and the end; everything else—church, creed,

Bible—is means, the precious but passing servant of the sovereign and everlasting soul. Death awaits everything but soul; in the transformations of being nothing is perdurable but soul. Soul and its works are the heart of all we know, and the relation between these two parts of the spiritual life of the world is defined with unsurpassable clearness and pathos in these ancient words of faith:—

“Of old didst thou lay the foundations of the earth;
And the heavens are the work of thy hands.
They shall perish, but thou shalt endure;
Yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment;
As a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:
But thou art the same,
And thy years shall have no end.”

Such is the soul of God; according to Christian faith, such is the soul of the Lord and such the soul of man.

III

Originality in theological thought is another of the things that are worth while, and never since the apostolic age has there been an opportunity for originality in the sane meaning of the word such as exists today. By originality I do not mean mere individuality or brilliance or charm of mind. There is a type of mind to which the word originality is applied because of its mode of operation, and not because of its achievement. Such a mind scintillates with wit and humor; it moves by sudden turns and surprises; it deals in hints and suggestions that are novel; its chief value is in its strange, brilliant movement and not in its goal. Again, such a mind is artistic, original in device, but not in the substance of its thought, not in insight or command over its subject. This subjective originality is immensely interesting and in its way valuable, but it does not concern us here. The originality that seems to be priceless is objective; it advances upon its subject in a great invasion, illuminates reality like the sun, and while it is itself hard to look at, makes the world that lives in its light visible and beautiful.

This objective originality is of several grades and is adjusted to the differing capacities of serious minds. It means first of

all the new, either absolutely or relatively; in the second place, it signifies greater depth in the apprehension of the old and the putting of the old thus apprehended in new relations; finally, it stands for immediate contact with reality.

That there should be absolutely new insights in the sphere of religion has from time immemorial been regarded as something akin to madness or blasphemy. Such originality, it is generally believed, is possible only to ignorance. Only those who know little of what the great world has thought can live in the vain hope of this achievement. The Christian church has accepted the ancient insight as exhaustive and final, notwithstanding its belief in the infinitude of the sphere of the soul and the coming of the Holy Ghost. Even the relatively new has been expected only from minds of the rarest distinction, and this relatively new has been considered infinitesimal in amount and incidental in importance. The antinomies of the old categories of theology have vexed the intellect into dissatisfaction; they have paralyzed it with despair of anything new and better. Under this load of humility, enough to sink a navy, it is not strange that so few new insights have freshened and enriched the weary way of theological science. It is a misfortune to acquiesce in the feeling that hereafter the sole possibility of originality, in the sense of the relatively new, lies in the sphere of natural science; it is likewise a mistake.

Today we are the witness of at least one example of this kind of originality, in the universal emergence of a new category of theological thought. This new category may be expressed in the term *humanism*. This term has been sadly abused in the philosophical world; it has been used now in a profound way and again in a shallow; it has advanced by evil report and good report; and whether they that are for it or they that are against it are the greater in number is not clear. Yet the word covers what is incontestably the profoundest insight of our time, and in a genuine and wholesome sense this insight is new.

Notwithstanding what old Xenophanes said of the crude anthropomorphism of his day, and his fine scorn thereof expressed in his famous words that "if cattle or lions had hands, so as to paint with their hands and produce works of art as men do, they

would paint their gods and give them bodies in form like their own, horses like horses, cattle like cattle," his remark is chiefly valuable as showing that he understood little of his essential nature as man, and little of the one Supreme Being whose existence he confessed. The same want of fundamental clearness and grasp confuses the theistic argument both in attack and defence through almost the entire history of thought. It is open to serious question whether Plato knew that his Idea of the Good was a form of humanism, whether Aristotle perceived that his Eternal thinker was an Eternal man. It is hardly open to question that Hume and Mill, in their negative process, failed of fundamental clearness here. Indeed, it is perhaps not too much to say that for the first time in history men are now beginning to see clearly that theism is humanism applied to the interpretation of the universe; that humanism means the apprehension of the Infinite through man as the highest we know; that man comes to his best in Jesus Christ, and therefore, that Christianity is the sovereign form of humanism. That there is risk in this interpretation is clear; it is, however, the risk of a great faith, and is therefore worth while. Besides, it is well to see that belief in God and its opposite mean the victory and the defeat of man. Further, we must make this choice of the Eternal humanity, or an inferior choice, with less reason for its truth, or we must stand dumb and helpless in the presence of the Infinite. It is not true to say that the human interpretation of the Infinite is all we can do: we can do nothing; we can substitute for the human the sub-human or brutal. It is true that the human interpretation of God is the best we can do, and that while it involves the venture of faith, it is infinitely worth while.

Turning now for a moment to the fruitfulness of this new insight, we see at once that if God and man are essentially akin, the humanity of God is that in him which chiefly concerns our race. The emphasis is upon his character, and the approach to the mystery of his being is best made through his character. Love is the great illumination in the metaphysic of faith. Again, if the divine and the human are in essence identical, the old devices that were invented to save the dignity of Jesus Christ are outgrown. To call Jesus the ideal or perfect man is to give

him the highest possible praise; it is the same kind of praise that we give to God when we address him as the Eternal humanity, or when we say, "Our Father who art in heaven." The kinship and continuity of souls in all worlds is an insight working widely today in free minds in the Christian church and beyond it; it is an insight slowly bringing about something like a revolution in the three great departments of Christian philosophy,—in theology, in Christology, and in anthropology; it is a single instance awakening the religious mind of the time to the possibility of other new insights of a fundamental nature. The time is ripe for the discovery of a relatively new order of categories as the intellectual expression of the religious and Christian heart.

If originality in the sense of the new or the relatively new is a possibility open to question, originality as meaning greater depth of apprehension is not exposed to the same degree of doubt. This kind of originality is sorely needed, and it is open to a much larger number of minds. The old concepts must be made to bear profounder meanings; as matter of fact, in the lives of religious depth these categories carry vaster and more precious burdens. In this generation the idea of God means something immeasurably more just and humane than it meant even two generations ago. The relation of the idea of God to the world of human beings, contemporary, historic, and racial, has brought this idea to a content of moral meaning inexpressibly richer and grander. Here comes into full view one great aspect of the originality of Jesus. Compare for a moment the idea of God entertained by the loftiest of the prophets of Israel and the idea of the God and Father of Jesus. The idea is inexpressibly more inward and spiritual, it is set in vastly deeper and more vital relations, and it carries a burden of moral tenderness and humanity immeasurably greater. Jesus takes the old ideas of God, the love of God and the love of man, the kingdom of God, and transforms them by the greater depth of his thought and the nobler content of meaning which he makes them bear. The silver currency has become gold, and the gold represents the empire of absolute goodness. So the ideas of law and sin, ethical ideal and capacity, under the profounder insight of Jesus, become something new. For the precious ideas in the faith of

his people the mind of Jesus was the refiner's fire; what went in and what came out were the same only in name. This note of originality in the teaching of Jesus seldom receives the emphasis that it should receive. The question is not whether Plato and Aristotle were monotheists, whether the Hebrew prophets were the originators of moral monotheism, whether there have not been numberless persons of high distinction who held with Jesus the Fatherhood of God. The question is, what content of meaning did the concept carry? The contention is that here, over all competing systems, there is immeasurably greater purity and depth, and therefore originality, in the teaching of Jesus.

The example of the Master should stimulate the disciple. Many ideas of great worth are inlaid in the soil of superstition. The ideas of revelation, inspiration, regeneration, atonement, especially the ideas of the supernatural, need the refiner's fire. There are elements in them of the utmost preciousness; and yet, because of the mass of ignorance and absurdity in which they are imprisoned, they are in danger of being flung, by impatient thinkers, to the dust-heap. The ideas of faith over its entire circle call for greater depth and purity of apprehension. Learning is good but learning alone will not do; penetration is needed, the love of ideas that leads the mind to ponder them till the day break and the shadows flee away.

The widest opportunity for originality is in the immediate contact with spiritual reality. Here we touch the peculiar distinction and genius of Christianity. The disciples of Jesus Christ have free access to God; they are kings and priests to God. Mediatorial systems and all devices that put the soul and the Eternal apart are foreign to the Gospel. One of the greatest of the New Testament writings has for its object the presentation of this universal privilege of Christian men; they have the right to personal approach and immediate fellowship with God. This, too, is the deepest meaning of our Protestantism. The right of private judgment is contained in the deeper right of immediate access to God. This profoundest privilege of the disciple of Jesus provides for a religion that shall be a religion in immediacy, a religion greatedened by the sense of history yet resting in the present vision of eternal realities.

We have seen that the structure of our human world is personal, that the constitution of our universe is personal; both the personal world and the personal universe are in action and inter-action. This action and inter-action are going on under our eyes; they mean throwing into the field of vision the phenomena in which souls in time and the supreme eternal soul are revealed. The social world and the social universe are volcanic; the fire and flame are pouring forth under our observation. We are free not from ancient aid, but from ancient domination; we welcome the light of all the ages while we refuse to wear their colored spectacles; we cherish tradition, but decline to employ it as a measuring-rod of truth; we behold God face to face working in this tremendous world of man, flaming forth his justice and pity and calling upon us to lay to heart the vision.

At length we stand in theology where science has stood for centuries, holding the past as an aid to immediate vision, declining to substitute antique opinion for present insight. The pure in heart shall see God. If the pure soul may see God the Supreme soul, surely he may see all other souls in relation one to another and to God; may see this world of souls instinct with God in action, and thus come to know through immediate beholding the greater things of the religion of the Lord.

Second-hand religion is doomed; it turns the Christian church into a pawn-shop and encourages men to trade in things of the spirit. Second-hand religion at best is but preserved fruit, tolerable only between seasons and in the winter of our discontent. The call is for the primary dealing with the spiritual world and a mind rich in the impressions and images that come from immediate contact with God.

One form of immediate contact with God has always been held by the faithful. Prayer lives in immediacy; perhaps the most significant thing in prayer as used by the faithful in all ages and among all races is this fact of immediacy. It is an impressive exercise to assemble in imagination the world as it kneels or stands in its moments of prayer, and to reflect upon the fact that the world in its prayer is in immediate fellowship with God.

The exercise of mind involved in prayer when it ceases to be vain repetition is remarkable. No great soul has ever been

content to address God wholly in the thoughts and words of another. Liturgy has its uses; but liturgy as an exclusive prescription is an impertinence to the soul that would speak to God its own life in all its fulness of sorrow and hope; it is a serious embarrassment to the soul that would, in a congregation of souls, discern their need and present that need in the simplicity and energy of personal vision to God. Liturgy is to be feared, however, chiefly because it encourages the dismissal of immediacy in religion. Prayer does not begin till it becomes a dialogue of the soul with God, a dialogue in the depths of sin and distress or on the heights of victory and peace. Prayer, like speech, has its style; and while words and phrases are adopted from the litanies of the race, they are wrought into new individuality and become the servants of the master who employs them, living in the distinction of his manner. Substitutes here carry with them the shadow of death; to be driven by the difficulty of prayer to the refuge of liturgy, is to be driven to defeat along one line of supreme privilege and hope. The day that a Congregational minister confesses his dependence upon liturgy he acknowledges himself beaten where victory is worth more than at any other point of the field, and he goes forth like Samson shorn of his locks, who wist not that his strength was departed.

I suppose that no great soul has ever used liturgy other than as an aid. It has been set at nought in the central personal wrestle of the spirit with God. It is this fact that saves prayer to the witness of immediacy. Here we see that the dialogue of the pious and rapt soul with God is one of the things that have kept the church close to eternal reality. So long as men pray and want to pray, so long as they carry hearts burdened with great meanings to God, and speak them to him in the simplicities and nobilities of speech coined under the constraint of profound feeling, there will be one section of human life, at least, in immediate communion with God.

Prayer is, however, an example of the law of immediacy that should extend over the entire range of religious experience. All the interests of religion should be seen by those who deal in them. Upon coming from his study to the room where his family were

gathered, Bushnell, with his face shining, replied to the question, "What have you seen?" "I have seen the Gospel." He had looked for it, toiled through worlds of débris to get to it; finally, he arrived; there it stood in its aboriginal splendor and he beheld it. It is pathetic to reflect that on the whole Bushnell's experience is singular. It should be universal; for it exhibits the call and privilege of every Christian man. The hope that in Bushnell seemed audacious should seem so no longer. The débris grows less and less. No world of authority today throws the sun of righteousness into eclipse. When Carlyle began his effort to recover Cromwell to the vision of mankind, it seemed to him hopeless. He set forth his despair in words of rare pathos and beauty even for him. The hunt was for the god Balder; it was long, hard, desperate; at length the pursuing soul came to the innermost recesses of the underworld where Balder was imprisoned, beheld him as he was, saw the veritable Balder, but could not bring him back. As with the lost Balder so it has been with the Gospel of Christ. It has sunk under world-encumbrances, and great spirits have in the past despaired of even seeing it, much less of bringing it back. But the day of the Lord is here; and because it is here, his disciples may see him and his kingdom and restore them to the immediate vision of the faithful.

IV

It is worth while to try to get at the interior meaning of traditional theological ideas. Those who have won their freedom should be without impatience, certainly without unfairness, in dealing with the dominating ideas of the past. Freemen should be the first to see the elements of present availability in ancient beliefs, the swiftest to recognize under antique forms of thought the evolving spirit of truth. Failure here is disgrace, as we see in a mind like Bacon. The reader of Bacon who knows Plato and Aristotle is ashamed of the Englishman's depreciation of the Greek thinkers, whose grasp of human truth is immeasurably greater than his; indeed, he figures as an extempore genius in comparison with their mature and monumental achievement.

Bacon would have done far better for his new truth had he set it in the presence of the old with sympathy and honor.

The theological achievement of Christian history needs revaluation; in this revaluation there is surely much to enrich the thinker today. The sense of history has indeed been too often a paralyzing influence; freedom has too frequently been gained by an abrupt break with the past, and maintained in fierce antagonism to it. This is abnormal. The sense of history should be the recognition of the working and expression of the spirit of truth in men; the work and the expression must go on; but continuity among thinkers should be preserved by the present greatening the past. Essential ideas need not lose their historic associations when lifted into new range and character. Progressive minds have greatly erred here; they have seldom seen the law of the kingdom of truth,—first the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear; seldom have they kept the memory of the spring morning in the rich and glowing beauty of autumn. Background is thus apt to be absent from the work of the pioneer; the vast world of man is reduced to a single aspect; the vitalization of ideas that comes from their association with the greatest minds in immemorial reaches of time is too lightly regarded; the prophet is not lifted as he should be by the consciousness that the whole ideal majesty of the past seeks new and higher utterance in him. Our creative work in theology is crude on this account; it is mean through narrow sympathies; and our spirituality lacks the body and flavor which the consciousness of history alone can impart.

For these reasons I deplore the easy disregard, so common today, of the great imperfect ideas of historic theology. The mention of the Trinity today, among progressive minds of every name, is apt to produce a smile; to say a word in its behalf is apt to be regarded as at best a pardonable lapse into sentiment. This attitude I am bold enough to call unworthy and even shallow. Great minds contended with one another in a battle royal for the attainment of the best insight into the being of God. You may dislike their name for what they found; are you sure that you can live without the reality on which their vision rested? When a thinker like Professor Royce comes to the conclusion,

in his great essay supplementary to that on the Conception of God, that distinctions of vital moment to man are eternal in the Godhead, students of theology should pause and reflect.

I confess that the vision of the Deity with an ineffable society in himself, complete and perfect in himself before all worlds, the ground and hope of our social humanity when in the fulness of time it was brought forth, a social Deity, expressing himself in the evangelical terms that denote the generic phases of our human world,—the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,—is to me, both for the intellect and the heart, of quite inexpressible moment. Here I find the eternal archetype of the social world of man; here I discover its eternal basis and the hope of its perfect realization. It is worth while to try to get inside the hard, arithmetical dialectical movement of thought, and thus gain something of the richness and grandeur of this ancient theistic insight.

In the Nicene creed and the ideas that lie behind it, one finds the great conception of man constituted as spirit in the image of the Eternal Son. The deeper Unitarian thinkers have always seen how much greater the Athanasian doctrine is than the Arian. The doctrine of man depends upon the doctrine of Christ; if Christ is only similar to God, then man is only similar. If Christ is consubstantial with the Father, so are all his children in time. I am unable to see why men who think resolutely should hesitate to affirm the deity of Jesus Christ. If there is no deity in Jesus Christ, he is not the son of God; if there is no deity in man, he is not the child of God. What we need today is faith in a race consubstantial with God, issuing in the sincere confession of the deity of Jesus Christ and the deity of man. The special incarnation of God in Jesus has been held and fought for by the historic church; the incarnation of God in man as man has been revived from early Christian thought by the Unitarian leaders; we should see that these beliefs are not contradictory. The belief about Jesus implies the belief about man. We are not called upon to dethrone the Lord; the summons is to lift the race whose prophet he is. When we repeat the Lord's Prayer, if we know what we are doing, we confess the consubstantiality of our being with the being of God. When we fall

from this doctrine of the essential identity in difference of God and man, we fall into a sea of images. God is our Father and we are his children only in parable; the family relation is only an image, dear to feeling, of something transcendental and inscrutable. Our human world forms images of God according to its own best relations, and it employs these as symbols of its worth to the Eternal; the truth being that the Eternal is essentially unlike us men and in his essence absolutely inaccessible to men. This is the nemesis that waits upon an inferior doctrine of man; and he alone moves on a level to which this nemesis cannot rise who has entered the ancient conception of the consubstantiality of man with God.

When we come to our New England theology it is fair to say that its humanity is undivine and its Divinity inhuman. That, however, is not the whole truth. Its ideas of sovereignty, sin, regeneration, reconciliation, and life in the spirit, are essentially imperishable conceptions of faith. The sovereignty of the universe belongs to something; our great predecessors reasoned that it belonged to God. The tragedy of the world of man is before us; it is a wild and terrible issue of inherited tendency and individual initiative, of mistake and perversity; it lies heavy upon the soul of the idealist today, and no doctrine of man can long detain serious persons that refuses to take this tremendous aspect of human society into account. The old idea of the exceeding sinfulness of man is but the dark obverse of blazing idealism with which our fathers judged the world. With a conscience in heaven man discovered himself and his world in hell. There is a moral depth in the old anthropology that atones for much of its theoretic crudeness. There is probably no tradition in the church so utterly worthless from a formal point of view as the doctrine of the atonement. Intellectually, it is confusion worse confounded; yet the human need that works through this tradition of reconciliation to the highest ideal within the soul and to the Holiest in the universe and rests there forevermore, is a revelation of the utmost depth in man and the utmost moral height in God. It is one thing to see the dust-heap of tradition and another to discover there the gold and the precious stones.

It is no valid objection to say that we do not construe the doctrine of God or of man as these were construed by men of old. Our object as thinkers is truth; and in the search for truth we do not resolve ideas into the times of their immaturity and keep them in this bondage, but following the supreme example we wink at these ideas so conceived and expressed. Our purpose is to conserve the intellectual treasure of faith and turn it to new and more fruitful issues. The history of Christian theology may be written in a manner that makes it look as the Roman Forum or the Coliseum looks today. It may be conceived as the achievement of an outgrown age and presented as a great and tragic ruin. Surely there is another and a better way of conceiving and representing these imperishable ideal forces. It is possible to enter the mind of these antique architects of thought, everywhere revise and greaten the plan; it is possible to do something toward the presentation of the finished design. Such an attempt is at least worth while; it issues in the sense of the great unbroken succession of prophets and thinkers; it preserves the precious sense of the continuity of faith; it enables the profoundest and the most unsparing criticism to go hand in hand with generous constructive purpose; it blends in one the passion for truth and the passion for humanity.

V

The way of salvation is another thing worth while. The actual condition and the ideal condition of human beings and the way from the one to the other are worthy of profound consideration. For most men life is a sordid and miserable labyrinth; to picture the freedom that exists beyond this labyrinth is not enough; the chief need is to find the way out. Jesus came to seek and to save men lost to the true uses, satisfactions, and hopes of existence; and his religion still offers itself as the way of rescue and return. Human beings are caught in a tremendous tragedy in which death seems to be the only way out. Perversity is one fountain of the moral evil or sin of the soul; men distinctly refuse light and prefer Barabbas to Jesus. Ignorance is another fountain of wrongdoing; there is a gigantic mistake

firing the pulse of wickedness; "if thou hadst known the things which belong to thy peace!" The evil condition is confirmed through weakness; the animal in man is strong, the spirit is faint. Thus moral evil tends more and more to take on the character of a malady; the world is sick and needs the physician of the soul.

Here is the material which was shaped by men of old into doctrines of original sin, depravity, and atonement. These were forms of diagnosis; we set them aside because they do not explain the case or call for the best treatment. The old material, the complex misery of man, is still here; our understanding of it must be less morbid, less the work of imagination, less at the mercy of strange riotous emotions, simpler, healthier, and more in accord with the fundamental notion that we are living in a redemptive universe. Still, the woful condition must be acknowledged; men who pattern existence after the beast of the field are ill at ease. Those who try to live on bread alone are attempting the impossible, and their sorrow is great. The world was made to run on the two rails of flesh and mind, energized from a third rail alive with God, and this world is engaged in the reduction of existence to an impossible simplicity. When the heart has a thousand tongues, it is vain to declare that it has but one.

There is crime in the world, and law undertakes to deal with that; there is vice in society, and public opinion measures itself against that; there is the selfishness sanctified by custom that works through the established order of human life, often ruthless as death, and the moral reformer attacks that; there is the hidden, pitiable plight of the soul in its perversity, ignorance, and malady, and the prophet of the Christian gospel addresses himself primarily to that. The seat of our difficulty and our woe is here. In this labyrinth we are caught, and religion is nothing unless it shall provide a way of escape.

The appeal of the gospel at this point is great. It does not limit its attention to the moral patrician; it does not select the fairest portion of society and pitch its tent there; it does not come to call the righteous, who are often merely the self-righteous, but sinners. It sees and understands the tragedy in which the

vast majority of human beings live and suffer; it has insight, wide and profound, and boundless sympathy. It thus wins its way, gains a hearing, and sets up the moral ideal in the depraved life in an atmosphere of Divine pity and Eternal consolation; it is thus able to begin a new creation in the animal life of men, to found and build the kingdom of God; it thus becomes a redemptive religion, a way of salvation, and Jesus is known as Redeemer and Saviour.

Here we see the strength of the evangelical tradition. Its analyses are poor, its formal beliefs inadequate, its philosophies of the life of the soul crude; but all these defects are as nothing when set beside its sense of the sin and woe of the world, its great sympathies, and its message of the compassion of God in Jesus Christ. On account of its primal consciousness of the moral tragedy of human life, its experimental knowledge of deliverance through the pity of God mediated by Jesus Christ, its abiding sympathy, and its glorious service, the Christianity of the evangelical survives and is bound to survive.

The purified philosophy of the Christian religion must absorb this precious element in the evangelical tradition. To take over all that goes with that tradition is impossible; can two walk together unless they are agreed? The origin of our human tragedy as in the Adam and Eve story; the universality and necessity of human depravity as the inescapable devil's birth-right of every child that comes into the world; the cross of Christ as the symbol of the expiation of God's wrath or as a debt paid on our behalf, or as a substitution for our suffering demanded by the majesty of offended law; the limitation of moral opportunity to this life; the reduction of the vocation of Jesus to the salvation of the elect; the claim that God is not on the side of every soul that he has made, are not essential to the spirit of the evangelical tradition; rather they are the impedimenta to be abandoned in the decisive battle that is now upon us.

As thought about God is freed from fear it must at once ascend in love. Here is our difficulty, the difficulty, too, of the nobler tradition of the intellect in all generations. As the intellect has been freed from fear it has not always ascended in love; it has abandoned the lower and its peculiar power, while it has failed

to find the higher and its mightier motive. An evil spirit has too often haunted the work of the free intellect. This spirit has made the intellect careless of the religion of children and youth, unmindful of the religious needs of pagans at home and abroad, and callous in presence of the moral and spiritual condition of society. Religion has become a programme for the patrician; it has lost its democratic breadth and vitality; it has sunk into an affair of concepts. Better concepts are a gain surely over poorer; but what are better concepts with no enthusiasm for humanity in comparison with crude concepts fired with passionate concern for human souls.

The reasonable faith of the future must take up into itself the prevailing forces in historic Christianity. It must shape its ideas in the presence of human need, conserve the spirit that makes the wilderness and the solitary place rejoice, concern itself with the highways to Zion, remember those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death; it must be the prophet of a redemptive universe and present the Christian religion as the way of salvation; it must not surrender to a crude and discredited scheme of thought the great names of Redeemer and Saviour as applied to Jesus; it must reclaim them and fill them with a purer and mightier content.

VI

There is still another interest which, it seems to me, is of the gravest concern for religious men of all types of opinion—the demonstration of the spirit. Is there a spirit in man? Is there a Spirit in the universe? Is it possible for the spirit in man and the Spirit in the universe to meet now, and may we look for the demonstration of the Holy Spirit?

This brings us face to face with that which is absolutely essential to Christian faith. The reality of the Christian religion depends upon the truth of those three propositions: there is a spirit in man; there is a Spirit in the universe; these meet in the victorious moral experience. The denial of spirit is the denial of God, the denial of the moral being of man and the denial of the truth of the teaching of Jesus. If these three

propositions are untrue, our faith is vain; if they are incapable of attestation, we are left in hopeless confusion; if they are true, and if they are open to verification, all other interests of faith become subordinate and even incidental.

Here we see at once how impossible it is to limit the process of faith to the intellect. The proof that we seek, the evidence that we demand, the demonstration that we crave, must be in and through the courses of life. Spirit is not adequately defined as immaterial force, nor as bare, unqualified consciousness, nor as personality pure and simple. Spirit is moral personality, conscious being in the character and power of love. If it is true that God is love, it is true that God is spirit. If it is true that man may become a lover and servant of the heavenly vision, it is true that man has the capacity of perfect spirit. If it is true that the Eternal lover and the human may meet in time and live, the Divine love in the human, it is true that man may have fellowship with God. These propositions are, however, hypothetical, and no more, while they remain in the sphere of the intellect; only through moral being in action can they be authenticated as true.

Christian experience is the great defence of the faith. All other defences run back into this; the citadel of faith is in the possibility of moral victory amid the waste and shame of the world. In this demonstration of spirit the first note is in the joint action of the personal soul with the Infinite soul. Then follows the social endeavor always in joint action with God, in the attack upon the brutalities of trade, the inhumanities of wealth and power, the mean acquiescence of men in their weakness and sordidness, the infamy of race hatreds, the fatal force of class distinctions when viewed in any other light than as providing distinct and greater service to the whole; the injustice of government, the merely provisional character of much in law, the warfare of man upon man, the colossal denial in action of human brotherhood. The joint action of the spirit in man and the Spirit in the universe over the whole breadth of humanity is the sole and only way to articulate the demonstration of the ultimate realities of faith.

It is reported that Daniel Webster during his last days said,

in answer to some words about the hereafter, "The fact is what I want." What we need in the deepest things of the soul is reality. Subtle reasoning may be a clever concealment of ignorance, skill in dialectics may be merely the trick of the intellectual juggler, even a sober and weighty order of concepts may come to appear an imagination, insubstantial as a dream. Substance, reality, fact, is the great demand of the vexed soul; and in vain do we try to meet this demand beyond the tides of life itself.

If we look into the Old Testament, we see at once that its strength is here. Reality is an issue through the intellect from the moral being of man. Everywhere reality is attained and articulated through action. The Old Testament presents a moral world in action; and through this world in action the eternal reality is delivered. Speculation apart from the suffering and achieving spirit is foreign to the genius of the Old Testament. It is equally foreign to the genius of the New Testament. The greatest thing in the gospels is the authentication which the teaching of Jesus receives in his life. He returned from his temptation in the power of the Spirit; his whole career was in the demonstration of the Spirit. His method of authentication is set forth in the words: "He that doeth the will of God shall know the doctrine." Thus Arnold's plea for conduct as three-fourths of life, Robertson's contention in behalf of knowledge through obedience, and Fichte's great insight that the test of reality is not in feeling nor in thought, but in action, are set forth with incomparable clearness and completeness in the way of the Lord.

If our homage to intellect is to be a reasonable homage, the limits of pure intellect must be clearly seen. No man can by mere searching find God. Reality is not originated by thought, and in the realm of the soul it is not discovered by pure thought. Here the will is king and the intellect servant. Men wait today as never before for the new and deeper thought; but they wait for something more. The best thought leaves us at the outer gate of Paradise; it leaves this Paradise in the region of possibility. Aristotle's two great words are *δύναμις* and *ἐνέργεια*, possibility and actuality, and they are of moment here. Pure

thought gives possibility and no more; to give actuality, the will must work with the intellect. Hence the universal appreciation of the great moral personality; such a personality is a world-revealer, a world-authenticator. The society of moral persons interpreted through moral genius is therefore the ultimate source of revelation, because it is the final authentication of the ideas of faith. Christian society inhabited by the heavenly vision, thoroughly aroused, in action, and going as the sea goes when the tempest has been upon it for many days, or as the planet goes in perpetual exemplification of the great law of gravity, would know itself and its universe as spirit, and it would declare in the irresistible logic of the creative life the reality and the coming of the kingdom of love.

Our wisest thinkers have always seen that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is the deepest in our Christian faith. Here is the hope of the hardened impenitent, the demoralized penitent, the soul in its ignorance and perversity, in its blazing idealism and its mean and black actuality. Here is the ground of our confidence in the growing revelation of God to mankind, in the unbroken succession of the prophets and their availing service in the continuous upward movement of the thought and character of the race. That nothing essential may be lost, that everything prophetic may be brought to perfect realization, that error may be eliminated, that evil may be overcome and done away, converted into eternal warning, and used as material to deepen the moral consciousness of man, that the great past may find expression in the greater present, and that the greater present may come at length to the consummation of the future, we rely upon the Holy Spirit. But this reliance must not be through mere or pure thought; it must be through action, joint action, till our world heaves and sighs with the indwelling energy of God, consciously invoked and let in through the consent and authentic cry of the soul.

Apart from this world of triumph and moral energy, all great symbols of the Christian faith, all theologies and philosophies of religion, the poetry of the church, and even the Bible itself with its attestation of a moral humanity in communion with a moral Deity, become as dead leaves in the whirl of the autumn

wind. A contemporary world devoid of God in the rhythm and fire of its action, leaves the historic world of faith pale and ineffectual. In religion the sovereign word is now. Man and the universe are today before the judgment seat, and nothing in the way of defence will finally avail but the present attestation of spirit.

The principle of unity in this series of things that have been said to be worth while is the living soul of man in fellowship with other souls and with God. From this aboriginal order we gain our vision of a world of spirit, a universe of Spirit; to this primal order of persons we come for original insight; this authentic order it is that sanctifies the antique in all its nobler phases; for man as soul we seek the way of salvation; and through this ultimate reality we crave the demonstration of the Spirit. The rational approximates the real as its image, but the rational is not the real; being and thought are two and not one,—twins of the Siamese order they may be, yet each has a distinct existence. The world is constituted in God; our humanity is constituted in God; it is the task of thought to discover this divine constitution of man and his world. The discovery is an intellectual satisfaction, and it is more; it is a condition of vital enlargement. For in the case of beings constituted in moral freedom, growth is not inevitable, it waits upon self-discovery. The great words in the Parable of the Lost Son are these: "When he came to himself." From the first he had been made according to a noble plan; the operation of this plan was not inevitable; it was helpless save in the way of protest and nemesis till self-knowledge arrived. Therefore man's being and the being of man's world demand the service of the enlightened mind.

Indeed, one of the woes of religion in all time is its refusal of the service of the enlightened and noble intellect. All other human interests prosper as they are served by clear intellect; no sane person imagines that progress is anywhere possible in these interests except through larger knowledge and deeper insight. Our world of science and applied science is the demonstration of what the intellect can do for human advancement; the advancement of science is in many ways the advancement of man. Yet in the face of all this, men are tempted to exclude

the intellect from religion, or to reduce it to an affair of the intellect. The refusal to admit the intellect to the service of religion means the rapid degeneration of religion. Many painful examples of this degeneration exist. Where degeneration has become decided, religion has sunk to a compound of superstition and reality, a jumble of the incredible and the precious; and as a consequence it has lost its power over the educated mind. It is indeed deplorable to reflect how distrust and exclusion of the scientific intellect have reduced even the Christian religion, in many places, to the consolation of ignorance.

On the other side, it must be said that intellect is not scientific if it be not in full sympathy with its subject. In the free world of Protestantism we have intellect enough and more than enough of its kind. It is too often intellect without so much as the smell of religion in its operations; it is intellect unaware of the infinite reality of the Christian religion as it lives in the heart and conscience of Christendom, unconscious of its task as interpreter, and unfit through want of experience for insight and service. Therefore the damage that ensues to religion from the unfit intellect is about as great as that which results from the exclusion of intellect. Between religion as a mindless product and religion as the issue of an irreverent mind, there is little to choose. We are not shut in, however, to either alternative; we hear the call of the truly scientific intellect that loves facts, that lives in them, that seeks for reality in the suffering and achieving spirit, that finds it there as the miner discovers the gold in the rock, that digs it and brings it forth, passes it through its thousand furnace-fires, and presents it at last to the world that cares for reality beyond everything else, in utter purity and splendor.

In dividing the world of faith into the essential and unessential there is always involved some sacrifice of sentiment, some danger of melting the rich detail of religion into the abstract and remote, some liability of substituting for the glowing compound of experience "an unearthly ballet of bloodless categories." While the division is valid and must be made, I do not forget that things eternal come through things temporal, that great religion naturally expresses itself in the sensuous richness and color of great poetry; nor do I undervalue the immense gain for

human feeling when the Eternal is transfigured in the pathos and beauty of our human world. I recall that I once saw Mont Blanc at sunset from Morges on the Lake of Geneva. Across the lake the vision passed, and up the ravine beyond to the base of the great mountain, and from the base to the summit. There it stood in the glow of evening, transfigured for a few great moments, in the farewell fires of day. Soon the shadow of flame passed; it passed with regret to those who saw it come, who beheld it fade, and who loved its beauty; but when it was gone the main object of interest remained, the mountain, solitary, sublime, everlasting. So in our faith the imperishable burns in the fires of the perishable. The abiding substance of faith is thus transfigured in the pathos of time. The shadow of God becomes inexpressibly dear to men; still the shadow of God is only shadow, and when it vanishes, God himself remains the Eternal wonder and joy.

*THE RELATION OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK TO
PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN TRADITION¹*

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The main conclusions that were widely accepted at the close of the last century with reference to the origin of our first three gospels have been confirmed by the investigations of the first decade of the new century. Thoroughgoing re-examinations of the whole problem, such as those of Wellhausen, Burton, and Loisy, have resulted in the reaffirmation of the so-called Theory

¹ Bacon, B. W., *The Beginnings of Gospel Story*. 1909. "A Turning Point in Synoptic Criticism," in the *Harvard Theological Review*, vol. i, 1908, pp. 48-69. "The Purpose of Mark's Gospel," in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, vol. xxix, 1910, pp. 41-60.

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of Two Sources. According to this theory Mark is the earliest of the Synoptic Gospels, and served, in some form, as a documentary source for each of the other two Synoptists, who had, besides Mark, another written source, made up to a large extent of the sayings and teachings of Jesus. The term *Logia* was formerly much used as a designation of this second source, on the supposition that it was to be identified with the writing to which the church father Papias applied that name, but there is now a general disposition to avoid this usage and to employ some more neutral symbol, like the letter Q (*Quelle*, "source").

In spite of the continued dissent of a few eminent scholars, it still remains true that no explanation accounts so fully and so satisfactorily for the whole body of facts involved in the Synoptic Problem as does the hypothesis of two sources. Indeed there is good ground for the oft-repeated assertion that this view has long since passed the hypothetical stage and should now be accounted an established fact. For it is possible to prove not only that Mark served as a source for Matthew and Luke, but further that it supplied to them the outline and framework for their narratives. Why otherwise should all three have generally the same order of

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events? Why otherwise should Matthew and Luke, after introducing new material, resume Mark's order? This is done by Luke, for example, after his so-called Greater and Lesser Insertions (6 20-8 7, 9 51-18 14) and by Matthew after the Sermon on the Mount (chapters 5-7). Reasons are usually discernible when transpositions have been made, or at least very plausible ones can be suggested. Dependence on Mark is evidenced, however, not only by the same sequence of events, but also by the same succession of details in most of the incidents which the other Synoptists recount in common with him. The variety that exists in this regard is slight when compared with the general parallelism, and that, too, when there is no evident or inner necessity for any particular order. Again, Mark's vocabulary and turns of expression have been incorporated into the other gospels in considerable measure. This has been done, to be sure, by each writer with much freedom and without abandoning his own literary methods. Luke especially has introduced many changes that are obviously intended to serve the end of clearness and improvement of style, with the result that he actually becomes a commentator on Mark. If it is granted that Mark, in its present form or one that was not essentially different, was used to such an extent and at such an early date by the writers of our first and third gospels, its prime importance is at once evident. The theory of two sources has given it a value that it did not possess under former views as to the origin of the gospels, for ancient tradition and the conclusions of the earliest critical study were not favorable to its priority. Thus Augustine held that it might be an abbreviation of Matthew, and in modern times a kindred view has a distinguished advocate in Professor Zahn. F. C. Baur, founder of the Tübingen School, regarded it as the latest of the Synoptic Gospels and as a colorless excerpt from them, thus accepting in substance the theory that had been put forward by an earlier scholar, Griesbach, and numerous other modern scholars before and since his day are so far in accord with this position that they have made Mark secondary to either one or both of the companion narratives.

But, supposing Mark to have been used as a documentary source by each of the other Synoptists, can we decide whether

they knew it in substantially its present form or in an earlier edition, a primitive Mark, of which the present gospel is the outcome? This question has been much discussed in recent years, and the end is not yet. It must still be regarded as belonging in the category of unsettled problems, notwithstanding the fact that both those who favor and those who oppose the assumption of an earlier form are very positive in their convictions. Decision one way or the other does not materially affect the general estimate of the gospel. It may be said that the majority of scholars at present do not think that the evidence is favorable to such an hypothesis. It is not denied that there have been various textual modifications in Mark, for the manuscript evidence proves that this has been the case no less than in Matthew and Luke, but it is another thing to demand an earlier form that was essentially different, one that was either shorter or longer than our present gospel.²

If it be agreed that Mark possesses relative priority and was a main source for each of the other Synoptic Gospels, we have only reached a notable mile-stone on the way. Other stretches

² The principal reason for assuming the use of an earlier Mark, differing somewhat in form or extent from the present gospel, is the agreement of Matthew and Luke against Mark in omissions, additions, and forms of expression. The omissions, estimated at about thirty verses, are particularly perplexing. Why, it is asked, should such a parable as that of the Seed Growing by Itself be omitted (4 26-29), and why the two miracles in 7 32-37 and 8 22-26? Why, in the narrative of the healing of the epileptic boy after the descent from the mount of transfiguration, should the striking conversation with the father of the child be found in Mark only? And why should the indications of chronological progress that stand out so prominently in Mark's account of the last week in Jerusalem be obliterated? Professor Johannes Weiss of Heidelberg feels that the hypothesis of a primitive Mark best accounts for these and like instances. On the other hand, Jülicher, Wernle, and Hawkins, not to mention others who are equally entitled to an opinion, think that the extended omissions can be accounted for more naturally on the ground of consolidation, transposition, or the substitution of other accounts. As for the agreements in expression between Matthew and Luke as over against Mark, they may in some cases be due to the tendency to assimilate one gospel to another.

There is a difference of view among those holding to a primitive Mark as to that gospel's original extent. A fuller text was formerly postulated, and is still contended for by some, but at present it is more usual to assume that Mark, as used by Matthew and Luke, was somewhat briefer than our canonical gospel. R. A. Hoffmann in a recent work (*Das Marcusevangelium und seine Quellen*, 1904) supposes that there were two differing forms of the primitive Mark in Aramaic.

that are beset with greater difficulties and are even more important continue to separate us from the end of our quest. What shall we say of the second gospel as to its historical character and origin? Does it give evidence of being a faithful record of primitive tradition? Does it represent the first attempt of any considerable magnitude to set down the gospel in written form? Or are there indications that it is itself the outcome of a varied and complex antecedent literary activity? It is upon this stage of investigation that we find ourselves entering in earnest in the opening years of the new century. There has of late been a remarkable activity in the work of pioneering and in the reopening of old trails that seems to promise a safe footing for advance. We have no definite information as to how early a beginning was made with written records of Jesus' deeds and teachings, and consequently all kinds of *a priori* conjectures have been hazarded. The year 50 A.D. has been suggested by several writers as a probable date. It is likely that the need of such accounts would not be felt for a considerable time, since oral tradition would suffice for all the demands of teaching and preaching, and from Paul we gain no certain evidence of a written gospel. When, however, we come to the prologue of Luke, we are told that "many had taken in hand to draw up" such narratives. Were some of these writers predecessors of Mark? Schleiermacher in his day had a theory that brief written records formed the basis of our present gospels. For nearly fifty years Professor Bernhard Weiss has steadfastly asserted Mark's dependence on an earlier Discourse-source (Q) that included considerable narrative material. For the rest he supposes the use of oral tradition, namely, communications of Peter. Nearly twenty years ago Professor Wendt of Jena advanced the theory that several independent documents had been used in Mark which represented distinct groups of Petrine tradition. These were combined and commented upon by the author of the second gospel. Professor von Soden of Berlin has for some years held that a Petrine source could be separated out from other later material. But, in general, up to the beginning of the present century few believers in the priority of Mark felt the need of postulating that this gospel, aside from the apocalyptic discourse in chapter 13, rests on written

sources. So Professor Jülicher holds to the essential unity and originality of Mark as regards earlier written sources, as does also Professor Wernle. Professor Schmiedel of Zürich, in his well-known article "Gospels" in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, introduces his paragraph on "Sources of Sources" with the statement that of course except at a few points the use of such earlier written sources cannot be raised above the level of conjecture. Of late, however, it has been affirmed with increasing frequency and emphasis that Mark gives unmistakable evidence of being composite in character, that it rests on sources, no less than Matthew and Luke, that it does not so much inaugurate Christian literary activity as register an important stage in its progress. Mark impresses Professor Zahn, for instance, as a "mosaic carefully constructed out of numerous pieces."

The scholar to whom perhaps more than any other is due the credit of focussing attention on the question of the origin and historical character of the Second Gospel is the late Professor William Wrede, of Breslau. In 1901 he published a book entitled "The Messianic Secret in the Gospels" (*Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien*). After stating his acceptance of the theory of two sources, he proceeded to point out that this put on Mark the responsibility of being the main witness for the outline and development of the gospel history. How important, then, to study this gospel in all its parts with utmost care and come to some conclusion about it as a whole! He set forth most forcibly the inadequacy of the prevailing fragmentary, atomistic investigation which dealt only with detached portions of the Synoptic tradition. It was his view that Mark was written at the earliest some thirty years after the events therein recorded, and that this period afforded abundant opportunity for the recasting of tradition. Only in a part of the book, at most, can we assume that we have the memories of an eye-witness, and these come to us as the free reproduction of a narrative the written form of which was separated by a considerable time from its original oral form. He finds that the gospel as a whole gives unmistakable evidence of extensive editorial transformation, and has been adapted and supplemented, in accordance with later dogmatic views, to such an extent that the primitive facts are effectually

obscured. He bases this conclusion on the assumption that Jesus was not regarded as Messiah during his lifetime, but only after his resurrection. Soon after that event, however, it came to be believed that he must have been Messiah already during his earthly ministry. The writer of Mark so teaches, and reconciles this view with the real facts by the theory that Jesus did all that was possible during his life to hide his Messiahship. This is the dominating conception that colors the whole gospel, with the result that it is not so much an historical record of trustworthy recollections regarding Jesus, as a disconnected narrative lacking real progress, and written in the interests of a dogmatic conception of primitive Christian belief. It is not strange that this book created a stir, or that its conclusions should be widely challenged. At the same time it speedily became recognized as a most important contribution to the method of New Testament study. In disproof of Wrede's main conclusion it was pointed out that Mark itself affords the best evidence that it was as Messiah that Jesus was crucified by the Roman authorities. It was also shown how the writer's failure to consider the whole evidence, his reading into the account motives of which the evangelist was probably innocent, and his rigid demand for logical sequence where it could not reasonably be expected, had led him to false deductions. Yet the influence of his discussion has been far-reaching. By provoking dissent it has powerfully stimulated renewed investigation. It has raised in a clear and definite way once and for all the question as to the historical character and origin of Mark.

One of the early results of its appearance was to hasten the publication of a work by Professor Johannes Weiss, which appeared two years later (1903) and has proved to be in some respects one of the most valuable contributions thus far made to the study of the second gospel. Its title, "The Oldest Gospel" (*Das älteste Evangelium*), indicates the writer's view as to the priority of Mark, but he also believes that the gospel is itself based on traditions that had already to some extent assumed written form. Particularly is this thought to be the case with the words of Jesus, which were probably known and used in the churches of that day in a reasonably complete collection. Accord-

ingly, Weiss claims for Mark only that it may represent the earliest attempt to present the apostolic gospel in the form of a narrative of Jesus' life. This does not mean that the motive of the writer is supposed to have been primarily historical or biographical. It was rather a missionary impulse that moved him. He aimed to present that which should be known by those who believed on Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. He recorded not what was new, but what was known and received under apostolic sanction. Thus we have in Mark the gospel prepared for the service of the missionary church and written down from the point of view of the religious ideas of its author. It is as such that the thorough-going analysis of J. Weiss seeks to understand it.

In Weiss's view a considerable portion of the contents of Mark is derived from reminiscences of Peter, and it is deemed probable that these memories had already taken definite form. Clearly they did not present a connected picture of the daily life of Jesus, but consisted rather of a collection of anecdotes and small narrative groups, giving glimpses of especially significant incidents and experiences in Jesus' life or in Peter's association with him. They presented Jesus as the Son of God, the Chosen One, already equipped on earth with all power and authority and about to come as Messiah. A second group of passages entitled "Party Discussions and Controversies" (*die Schul- und Streit-gespräche*) is also thought to preserve excellent tradition. It is so designated because it has about it a scholastic atmosphere but is not marked by any traits of personal memory that would necessarily connect it with Peter. The description given to a third class of material that Mark has incorporated into his gospel is "Words of Jesus with or without Narrative Setting" (*Worte Jesu mit oder ohne Erzählungsrahmen*). Here are included single sayings and more extended accounts that have parallels in the discourse-material of Matthew and Luke and that do not seem to possess the characteristics of the Petrine narrative. In some few instances Mark may have been dependent on the reminiscences of Peter, while Matthew and Luke on their side used the Discourse-source (Q). So, too, Mark may at such times have drawn also from oral tradition. He evidently did not have so much interest in collecting sayings as in applying them in connection with his nar-

ration after the manner of a teacher or preacher. J. Weiss agrees with his father, B. Weiss, in thus supposing that the evangelist was dependent in considerable measure on the Discourse-source (Q) and that this contained not alone the teaching and sayings of Jesus, but some narratives as well. The method of referring to Jesus' teaching is thought to imply that a reasonably full form of such a source was known to the readers of the second gospel. Finally, in the fourth place, it is held that Mark incorporated into his account some "Secondary Incidental Traditions," which may be old but which are marked by legendary traits. J. Weiss thus finds that in most of its parts Mark is a faithful and trustworthy witness to early Christian tradition. It is not, however, the neutral, comprehensive writing that some have supposed it to be. The selection and grouping of material, the views of Jesus' passion and death, of the province of the gospel, and of the end of the world, show that the writer belonged in temper and interest to the Pauline missionary circle. So far as the symbolical and poetical is present in his narrative, it is to be referred to the material at his disposal rather than to him.

The book of J. Weiss is important because of its soberness and balance, because it gives such abundant evidence of careful investigation, and finally because it frankly recognizes the difficulty and complexity presented by the problem of Mark's sources and the tentative character of any present solution thereof. The author realizes, as some who have followed him have not done, that we are not in a position to advance in this field beyond that which is probable and conjectural.

Professor Julius Wellhausen of Göttingen published a brief commentary on Mark in the same year that Weiss's book appeared (1903). It was followed in rapid succession in the next year by one on Luke and one on Matthew, and finally in 1905 by a compact "Introduction to the Synoptic Gospels" in which Wellhausen presented his conclusions as to their origin and relationship. His view is characterized by a peculiarly high estimate of Mark. It is the gospel *par excellence*, and was retained by the early church, after other gospels, more to the taste of the time, came into existence, on account of the sacredness given it by its age. The writer of Mark, according to Wellhausen, without doubt

intended to be comprehensive and to include in his account all the surviving traditions, the discourse-material no less than the narrative material. There is no reason to assume that he did not set down all that came to him or that he omitted what he knew had been previously recorded. He is least of all a supple-mentor. Mark is thus made to precede and to be entirely independent of the Discourse-source (Q) used by Matthew and Luke. It is said that the discourse-material developed and changed more in the course of time than did the narrative material. Wellhausen emphasizes the importance of literary attestation as the first standard of authenticity. The spirit of Jesus lived on in the primitive community and not only created a gospel about him, but further developed his ethical teaching—although, to be sure, on the basis he had laid. The ethics of the early church was really the work of Jesus, and that which manifested his spirit appeared to have the value of what he would have said in like circumstances. This view of Wellhausen as to the later and secondary character of the Discourse-source (Q) is regarded by many as one of the weak points in his investigation and can hardly be said to have withstood the arguments that have been urged against it by Jülicher, Harnack, Bousset, and others. He agrees that Mark's aim was not to describe the life and person of Jesus, but rather to show that he was the Christ. As this was the interest of Mark, so it was the interest of his day, and thus an explanation is found of why oral tradition had shrunk to such small proportions. Although Mark is the oldest gospel, yet its contents do not give evidence of coming directly from the intimate companions of Jesus. The narrative seems rather to have taken shape in popular tradition after a considerable course from mouth to mouth. The evangelist took up the anecdotal material and arranged it in three divisions (chapters 1-5, 6-10, 11-16). His work included further a certain amount of editing, the adding of introductions, conclusions, transitions, short summaries, lists, and sketches of such addresses of Jesus as by exception were not linked on to events. Oral tradition might be expected to be incoherent, and to contain varying accounts and parts belonging to various stages of development, but this consideration does not serve to explain all unevennesses

of form and content in Mark. A revision of the first writing has taken place, and sections of a secondary historical character have been added. Whether they are also secondary as to their literary form Wellhausen does not believe that we are often in a position to decide. As used by Matthew and Luke, Mark had substantially its present form, though they may have been able to consult also an Aramaic original. The defence of the theory of an Aramaic original for our gospel is perhaps Wellhausen's most valuable contribution to the discussion of Mark. There are few living scholars who are so well qualified as he to pronounce on this point. The proof that he advances does not consist so much in single phrases and isolated examples as in a combination of facts that prove the presence of an underlying Semitic syntax and style. This might possibly come through the use of oral Aramaic tradition, but it is far more probable that Mark was first written in this language. The place of writing would then probably be Jerusalem, and the date some time after the capture of the city by the Romans.

While Wellhausen indicates sections in Mark that he regards as secondary in their historical character, he does not believe that it is possible to separate out a primitive Mark or to trace stages of revision in the gospel. This had been attempted previously, and was undertaken anew in a work the first part of which appeared in the same year with Wellhausen's "Introduction." It is a small volume by Dr. Emil Wendling bearing the title "Primitive Mark" (*Urmarcus*), and described in the subtitle as an attempt to recover the oldest accounts of the life of Jesus. The author is the principal of the Gymnasium in Zabern, and is a specialist in classical philology rather than in theology. He disavows any particular doctrinal or religious interest, and says that he reaches his conclusions as a philologist, employing solely the methods of literary criticism. He finds that an earlier and a later source are present in the gospel, and indicates each, in printing the Greek text, by the use of different forms of type. From these two sources he distinguishes a series of additions, made by the final editor, which he brings together and prints in a section by themselves. Three years later, in 1908, a larger companion volume gave in detail the grounds for the earlier analysis. A third

part is contemplated, to deal with the vocabulary of the different sources, as well as with their historical character and value. It may be doubted whether what has thus far appeared will incline Wellhausen to a more favorable view of such an undertaking.

It is possible to speak here of some of the general conclusions only. Wendling tells us that he began his investigations with the study of chapter 4, where there seems to be unmistakable evidence of the presence of material from different hands. One hand is that of the editor, who is the real evangelist. His presence is said to be traceable in some sections preceding the chapter in question and in much that follows. In all, more than a third of the gospel is assigned to him. A study of his additions reveals him to be a dogmatist, and an awkward narrator, who in an unskilful way has imposed upon the simple historical narrative, or rather inserted into it, his theory of the mystical, allegorical character of Jesus' parables. He is credited with taking over and confusedly blending motives that belong to older material in the gospel. He generalizes and exaggerates. He seeks to have Jesus give instruction regarding pressing questions of the community life. The entire section, chapters 6 45-8 45, is thought to come from him by reason both of its form and content. It is he who took over sayings from the Discourse-source (Q) used by Matthew and Luke. He had a pronounced eschatological interest, and introduced most of the discourse of chapter 13 and also the designation "Son of Man." Where he uses older traditions he may transmit valuable information, but his own adaptations are serviceable only for ascertaining the conceptions, hopes, and desires of his own age.

The two main strata, which are the further outcome of the writer's analysis of the gospel, are assigned to two writers designated as M¹ and M². The latter (M²) made large additions to the composition of his predecessor (M¹). Especially is this true of the narratives of Jesus' miracles and of sayings intimately connected with some historical situation. This later writer has a joy in narration, and sees events not so much with the eyes of a historian as with the imagination and faith of a poet. He is farther removed from actual events than his predecessor (M¹) and views them in a transfigured light. He enlarged the historical

and geographical setting of the narrative that came to him, but kept the old order of events. He has given to the second gospel its reputation for vividness and liveliness. He too, like the third hand and final editor, takes over and uses in a new way themes of earlier narratives, but he does it with a skill, appreciation, and poetical touch that were lacking in that writer. He likewise makes use of Old Testament examples. He was probably in contact with living tradition regarding Jesus, even if we cannot succeed in uncovering the historical kernel in his narratives. He is, moreover, a valuable witness to the views of an age that was still permeated with Jesus' spirit, but he is less valuable than M¹, or than the evangelist, for information regarding the events of Jesus' life.

The original writer (M¹) was of a different character. Whereas M² may be called the poet of the gospel, and the evangelist the dogmatist, he may be called the historian. For he aims to reproduce from faithful memory the spiritual content of unforgettable experiences. There is little of the Messianic in him, and Jesus' sayings have the form of apothegms. His style is simple, clear, and concise. The material that Wendling assigns to this writer corresponds in considerable part to that which Professor von Soden refers to his Petrine source. In the investigations of von Soden Wendling seems to have found much suggestion, particularly in the contrast pointed out by that writer between the terse narrative in 1 14-4 34 and the amplitude that characterizes the three following incidents, 4 35-5 43. Such a narrative as that of M¹ may well have been, it is thought, a first attempt to record in a continuous account the memories of Jesus' life, beginning with the Galilean experiences and ending with the passion. The fundamental plan of the Gospel of Mark would then go back to this first writer, although his successor, M², did much to give the book its chronological appearance, and the evangelist on his part also added new journeys and incidents.

Many suggestive observations are to be found in Wendling, but his method as a whole is too subjective and lacks real foundation. The canon of style and of literary character is not equal to the burden that he seeks to impose upon it. What is called a philological and literary investigation is evidently governed largely

by dogmatic presuppositions. The theory of doublets is carried to an unreasonable extreme.³

Of much greater importance are two works of recent date. The first, and the more comprehensive in its scope, is a commentary on the Synoptic Gospels, in two volumes with a total of more than 1800 pages, by Professor Alfred Loisy. In the introduction (pages 1-268) the author reviews previous investigations, and also gives his own conclusions as to the origin and development of the Synoptic records. His discussion of Mark and of its relation to primitive Christian tradition is of particular interest, for it is written with a large knowledge of what has been previously wrought out in this field and brings together the results, old and new, which he accepts.

Loisy believes that our present Mark is removed several stages from the incidents therein recounted. It does not rest solely on oral tradition, nor does it represent memories that were guarded solely by eye-witnesses, any more than do the other gospels. He thinks that the fact that Matthew and Luke made use of written sources would of itself suggest that Mark did the same, and this presupposition is found to be confirmed by a careful examination of that gospel. The real author is the editor, or redactor, who used the material at his disposal to produce a work that is very far from being a biography, but is rather a didactic or catechetical demonstration of the Messiahship of Jesus. Loisy agrees with Wellhausen and others that the oldest apostolic traditions were probably of the same type.

³ For example, it is held that the incident of the healing of the demoniac in the synagogue in the original account of M¹ has furnished the motive to M² in the account of the stilling of the tempest (4 35-41) and also in that of the Gadarene demoniac (5 1-20), and supplied to the evangelist a motive for the story of the visit to Nazareth (6 1-6). This last-named paragraph contains, further, a duplication of 3 31 f., where there is a reference to Jesus' family. Evidence is also found that use has been made here of the Discourse-source (Q). At the same time the account is said to have upon it the impress of Paulinism. That, in spite of this, the whole trend of the incident seems to accord so poorly with the dogmatic tendencies of the evangelist is explained on the ground that the original saying implied Jesus' impotence to heal in a specific case. And, again, it is said that the writer does maintain his view by referring the lack of success to the people of Nazareth. Finally, it is asserted that the evangelist gives the incident as a particularly convincing example of the hardening of Israel. Such results do not commend the method.

That which was remembered and preached was what corresponded to Jesus' character as Messiah and was suited to edify believers. It will accordingly be hard, if not impossible, to distinguish between personal impression or memory and traditional interpretation, inference, idealization, or amplification. All was not false in the mythical hypothesis of Strauss, but the work of tradition has been much more complex and varied than that critic supposed. Difficult and delicate as is the task, the historian must seek to discriminate between that which represents the immediate action of the Saviour on those who had known him and that which represents his mediate action; that is to say, between the nucleus of primitive memories concerning his career and teaching and the progressive elaboration of the same in Christian preaching, in the ardent imagination of those who had believed on him through the testimony of other believers, and in the editing of evangelical records. Primitive recollections were idealized and enlarged into symbols of doctrine. Simple miracles of faith have been transformed into Messianic arguments and are recounted and interpreted as allegories in action. Loisy holds that there may have been an historical basis in most cases, but says that in many instances we are no longer in a position to decide whether this is true or whether a metaphor or a parable may not have been the real point of departure, or whether a sentiment of faith may not have been transformed into a material symbol. There may, for instance, have been a real incident back of the stilling of the storm (4 35-41), but, in his opinion, it is not probable that the same can be assumed for the walking on the sea (6 45-52). So, too, the account of the blind man at Jericho (10 46-52) may be purely legendary or symbolical. The two duplicate accounts of the multiplication of the loaves give symbolical instruction on a theme derived from the Old Testament. There is little probability that either of these accounts had a place in the preaching of an apostle, although they may have been put into circulation before the death of Peter and the leading apostles. Loisy thinks it may be questioned whether there is any historical incident back of the account of the transfiguration, which is now so evidently symbolical. In the narrative of the events of the last week in Jeru-

salem there have been many additions and modifications that are calculated to show that Jesus was the Messiah, who by his death was to fulfil prophecy and accomplish the salvation of the world. How far these are due to the evangelist and how far they are due to a preceding development may not be easy to decide. Loisy thinks that the evangelist's hand is especially responsible for much in the account of the burial of Jesus and of the discovery of the empty tomb, and that such an account could be written only after most of the eye-witnesses of the gospel history had disappeared. So the account of the trial before Caiaphas and of the release of Barabbas, which are so evidently apologetic, could hardly, he thinks, have been written before Caiaphas, Pilate, and the apostles had quitted the scene of history. The trial before Pilate, on the other hand, rests upon good historical foundation. He follows Keim in holding that the incident of the young man who fled away at the time of Jesus' arrest (14 51 f.) goes back primarily to the prophecy in Amos 2 16. All that follows Mark 15 40 may be due to the same hand that wrote 14 28, and this hand is called that of the last redactor.

As in the case of the narrative material, so also in the case of Jesus' teaching, Loisy finds evidence of extensive modification and amplification. Much of Jesus' teaching was lost, and that which survived existed in the form of short, incisive sentences, vivid comparisons, and pointed narratives. That alone was retained which was of practical utility and was directly suited to contribute to the edification of believers and the progress of the new religion. Its use to this end gave it a didactic, catechetical form. The text of the parables seems to have been less carefully guarded than that of the sayings. The allegorizing of them went on in a way that would be possible only for a generation that had not received the direct impression. Some parables may have been created, just as new sayings came into existence. An illuminating illustration of how this might come to pass in all good faith is found in the way Paul recounts Jesus' words at the Last Supper in 1 Corinthians 11 23 f. It may be remarked in passing that there is good reason for seriously questioning Loisy's exegesis of this passage.

What has been said shows the large place that historical criticism plays in Loisy's decisions. He recognizes the difficulty of literary analysis, when we are no longer in possession of an older source or sources that were probably used by the second evangelist, but still he thinks that a careful examination of the writing itself will afford us sufficient data. Mere absence of cohesion will not, indeed, suffice as a basis for analysis in a work that is so little literary in its character, but positive incoherence, and the correspondence of parts actually separated, will enable us to make trustworthy deductions. If there is lack of harmony between contiguous bits that come from different streams of ideas, if we find an accumulation of incongruous data that can be divided into homogeneous groups, each of which is characterized by its own inspiring motive, if we find double accounts of the same events, we shall be justified in assuming that we have here, as in other works possessing like characteristics, the combination of traditions or of written sources, and the complexity of redactional work. It is thus that in his commentary Loisy seeks to distinguish between what is really primitive and what is to be attributed to development and to editing. The first element will be important for the history of Jesus, whereas the last will enable us to recognize the tendencies, the aim, and even the personality of the editor himself.

When Loisy comes to his recapitulation of the residuum of historical facts embodied in the Synoptic Gospels, we find that it makes a substantial outline of Jesus' ministry. He accepts the theory of two sources, and distinguishes between the narratives of Jesus' deeds and his teachings. The Galilean ministry in and about Capernaum may have lasted a few weeks or a few months. Jesus' popularity almost affrighted him. He chose twelve and sent them out, because the Kingdom was to fulfil the promises of God to Israel. Loisy does not believe that Jesus' Messianic consciousness was a development. The time was too short, and the experiences after the first popularity were too unfavorable. He began his ministry with the conviction that he was to have a chief place in the coming Kingdom. The main contribution of experience would be an understanding of the chances that the Messiah would enter into his glory through death. Jesus main-

tained silence as to his Messiahship, because he was not such in reality, but was the one to whom this function belonged. After the retirement to the North and East he went to Jerusalem, not to die, but at the risk of his life to prepare for and procure God's coming. He knew the danger, but, if the Kingdom could only come through his death, the price was not too dear. To save his life was to lose it. Still he did not cease to expect the immediate consummation of the Kingdom. The Messianic manifestation on the Mount of Olives, if it rests on historical fact, would indicate that the time was near. So, too, his words at the supper with the faithful in the house of Simon the leper, which was really the Last Supper, do not signify that his death was at hand, but only that a radical change was impending. The Kingdom may be there tomorrow. Judas possibly saw the hopelessness of the cause. Jesus did avow his Messiahship before Pilate. If he used the terms Son of God and Son of Man, it could have been only on rare occasions at an advanced stage of his ministry, and in a sense that made them synonymous with Messiah. We cannot assume that he expected his death, but only that he contemplated its possibility, and this he can hardly have done without thinking of the resurrection.

The disciples probably fled to Galilee after the encounter in the garden, and we do not know that one of them continued in Jerusalem after Jesus' death. The empty tomb is regarded by Loisy as a probable close of the original account. The writer might well have regarded this as a conclusive proof of the resurrection. The stories of the appearances of the risen Lord given in the other gospels are really duplicate accounts of the Markan narrative. It may be that the account of the transfiguration was intended to supplement the record of the empty tomb, the aim being to correct the scandal of Jesus' death by an anticipation of his glory.

With reference to the redactor of the second gospel, Loisy agrees with the view that he was a Paulinist; that is, he may have been a disciple of Paul, and was in any event his great admirer, or, better still, his great partisan. Many evidences are found of his zeal for Paul and of his defence of him. It is suggested that the incident of the stranger exorcist (9 38 ff.) may have been

imagined in Paul's behalf. His gospel is a consciously Pauline interpretation of primitive tradition. Though of Jewish origin, he takes a decided stand against the Jews, and looks on them as devoted in a body to destruction. So, too, it can be said that he almost takes sides against the Galilean apostles, so much does he do to set forth their lack of intelligence and courage, especially the former. He was not an inhabitant of Jerusalem, and does not seem bound by his own memories or by information received from eye-witnesses. He dogmatizes as Paul does, and treats his sources with as much freedom as does the author of the fourth gospel, only he does it in a more superficial way, to demonstrate the Messiahship of Jesus. So also he makes notable additions to serve his didactic, apologetic, and polemic purposes. It is inconceivable that the writer was through long years the friend, disciple, and confidant of Peter, but he may have received a series of memories from the apostle, or may have made use of a source that came from one who stood in close relation to him. In any event it is certain that Peter had a preponderating part in the formation of apostolic catechetics. Thereby at least the fundamental tradition of the evangelical history goes back to him.

It is difficult to distinguish between what must be regarded as the memories of Peter and what may have come from the Discourse-source (Q). Both of these expressed the memories and the faith of the primitive community without the influence of Pauline theology. The Galilean apostles appeared there as the authorized witnesses for the life of Christ and for his teaching. Primitive apologetic would have the task of explaining Jesus' condemnation by Rome and his death. The apostles, accordingly, would not at first preach the history of Jesus, or any theme fixed by him, but their thought would centre, as did that of Paul, about his passion and resurrection. Proof would be sought in the Scriptures. Following this would come the need of showing that Jesus' ministry and teaching was such as befitted the Christ. We may conjecture that a written record of the principal sayings of Jesus, of which the apostolic generation guarded the memory, would be made relatively early. It is possible, though not certain, that this might be in Aramaic. So there may have been an early record of Jesus' ministry and passion, either joined

to the Discourse-source (Q) or, more probably, distinct from it. The first redaction of these documents would be considerably before 70 A.D., though one ought not to go much farther back than 50 A.D. These were small, catechetical works, implements of the apostolate, which had become useful, even indispensable, to Christian preachers who had not listened to the Saviour. These writings would be much copied, corrected, and amplified according to need. The collection of sayings grew rich in new sentences and the historical narrative in new anecdotes. The most ancient attempt that has come down to us to join the accounts together in a single book of instruction is the Gospel of Mark, which ought probably to be dated shortly after 70 A.D. It is an insufficient sketch and presupposes the preservation of a collection of discourse-material, whereas the compilers who follow sought to include all the traditional material in one book.

Shortly after the publication of Loisy's volumes, the second book above referred to appeared. It is a brief commentary on the Gospel of Mark by Professor B. W. Bacon, and is designed for English readers, but evidently for those who have busied themselves to a considerable extent with the Synoptic Problem. Besides the critical discussions that precede each section of exegetical comments, short introductions to the first and second parts of the book give in a summary way Professor Bacon's conclusions regarding the origin and historical character of the second gospel. Had these two introductions been combined, the change might possibly have contributed to a readier understanding of his view as to the actual course of Jesus' life. Although working in entire independence of Loisy, he is in agreement with him at many important points. He, too, believes that an early, simple narrative, which, by reason not only of tradition, but also of its own intrinsic characteristics, may be appropriately designated as Petrine, has been interpolated and embellished by a Paulinist whom we need not suppose to have had even a modicum of acquaintance with any one of the twelve. The Petrine element lies very far back and shows itself in spite of the evangelist rather than by his intention. It seems perhaps to have been already too firmly fixed to admit of radical

recasting. One of the sources drawn upon very largely to embellish and supplement the fundamental narrative was the Discourse-source (Q) used by Matthew and Luke. The material taken therefrom has not been joined on in any mechanical way, but is introduced in what often seem to be memoriter interpolations and supplements. Bacon thinks that the editor at times derives his narrative additions from a special form of the Lukan source (Q^{Lk}). In a few instances he supposes that the special Matthean form of this source was used (Q^{Mt}). Appropriate symbols, written in the margin beside the English translation, indicate Bacon's judgment as to the origin of the Markan narrative. He goes much beyond Loisy in the definiteness with which he seeks to determine this, every verse and phrase being accounted for, after the manner of the analysis of Wendling.

Bacon also goes beyond Loisy and most predecessors in the extent to which he finds the gospel dominated by Paulinism. The evidence adduced in proof of this is manifold. There is, first, a succession of incidents and utterances that are extremely anti-legalistic and anti-judaistic. A series of conflicts emphasizes Jesus' independence, and the independence of his disciples, of Jewish religious observances. The whole ceremonial system of Mosaism is denounced as "doctrines and precepts of men" (7 7). Marital relations countenanced by Mosaism are denounced as adultery (10 1-12). The Pauline apologetic of Israel's unbelief is adopted (4 11, 12). The way in which the various sayings and incidents are toned down, and even transformed, when transcribed in the parallel accounts of Matthew and Luke, makes the spirit of Pauline radicalism present in Mark all the more evident. Further, the attitude exhibited toward Jesus' kindred and toward the members of the apostolic circle is ultra-pauline. Peter is subordinated and repeatedly appears in an unfortunate light. The account of Jesus' appearance to him after the resurrection and of his "turning again" and "strengthening his brethren" (Luke 22 32) has been modified by the evangelist and finally omitted. Against the claims to primacy or authority for James and John and the rest of the twelve, he seems "to find the sharpest phrases all too weak." Peter, James, and

John never appear individually save for purposes of rebuke. Collectively, in the capacity of martyr apostles, they are, on three occasions, the exclusive witnesses of Jesus' conflict with the power of death. Finally, the positive and conclusive reason for regarding the second evangelist as an extreme Paulinist is the manner in which he conceives of his task. He seeks simply to produce belief in Jesus' person as the Son of God. He leaves his readers completely without information as to the law of Jesus, though he certainly was not ignorant of the teachings and commandments of the law. He does not give the content of Jesus' message until we come to the section 8 27-10 52, and here it is the Pauline principle of the doctrine of the cross. The evangelist's whole conception of what constitutes the apostolic message is the supreme manifestation of his Paulinism. He is dominated by theoretical considerations, and does not give evidence of a sympathetic and appreciative understanding of the real course of history.

The adjectives that Bacon repeatedly employs to describe the method and motive of the evangelist are "aetiological" and "apologetic." By the first is meant that the primary attempt is never to write history, but to explain and justify the beliefs and practices of the contemporary church by means of the tradition of its origin. Hence the proper approach for understanding the gospel in its present form is an acquaintance with the real and practical problems of gentile Christian life between 70 and 90 A.D. This knowledge is to be gained, before all else, from a study of the great epistles of Paul,—Romans, Corinthians, Galatians. The evangelist strings together groups of anecdotes from the story of Jesus to illustrate five general themes: (1) Baptism and Gifts of the Spirit; (2) the Ministry in its two functions of teaching and healing; (3) the Agapé and its symbolism of the bread of life; (4) the institution of the Church; and (5) the Eucharist. In undertaking an investigation of the gospel, the thing first of all to be looked for is the motive prompting the narration, and this is usually transparent enough when the conditions of the churches are understood. The unveiling, step by step, of the motives that led the evangelist to choose, mould, and rearrange his material, and in some few instances practically

to create it, is the most prominent feature of Bacon's commentary. He does not give to the independent, creative activity of the writer so large scope as does Loisy, but goes far beyond him in assigning motives for the redactional activity. Bacon also differs widely from Loisy in method and in the kind of motives assumed. He accepts in its essence the *tendenz*-method of Baur, holding, "first," that "the gospels are ecclesiastical formulations of the traditions, and must be interpreted as the products of their time," and, secondly, that "the issues of that time must be defined by independent scrutiny of the great Pauline epistles."⁴ In addition to this source we have as a means for controlling and correcting the account of the second gospel the material taken from the Discourse-source (Q), and from the special source of Luke (Q^{Lk}).

The story of the real course of Jesus' life which results from Bacon's analysis of the second gospel and from the comparison with all other known sources, is not as full as the sketch of Loisy, and differs from it considerably in fundamental points and also in details. "Jesus was a wage-earner of Nazareth, an ideal representative of that simple piety exemplified in the earlier type of Pharisaism unspoiled as yet by the ecclesiasticism of the synagogue system." "His public career began as a consequence of the violent interruption of the work of John" (the Baptist). In his message he went beyond John's summons to repentance and proclaimed the assurance of forgiveness. There is little in Mark to explain the popular support that gave to the movement of Jesus its Messianist character, but from the special source of Luke (Q^{Lk}) we get the needed information which is the key to the whole career of Jesus. This is his championship of the cause of the lost sheep of the house of Israel, his yearning to seek and to save that which was lost. God worked with him in preaching and healing, but the evangelist has transformed the character of the miracles by introducing marvellous features and thaumaturgic traits to prove Jesus' divine sonship. A collision with the synagogue authorities was inevitable from the first. Excluded from Galilee, no choice was left him but the transference of his mission to Judea, for there could be no thought of abandoning the cause

⁴ Harvard Theological Review, vol. i, p. 65.

of the lost sons of Israel, and systematic activity among the Gentiles is not likely to have entered his mind. There are indications that the primitive Petrine narrative told how Jesus at this juncture "assumed in the confidential circle of the Twelve the wholly new rôle and title of 'the Christ,'" not in its later meaning but in its original sense of "the expected Deliverer," "who brings Israel into its predestined relation of sonship to God." In any case he "did go up to Jerusalem" and "did follow a rôle that led to his execution by Pilate as a *political agitator*." Shortly afterward his followers "did ascribe to him not mere reappearance from the tomb, but exaltation to the place of the Messiah 'at the right hand of God'—attributes so exalted that it is difficult to believe they had no other foundation than mere reverence for an admired teacher. No; from the moment of his *coup d'état* upon the Temple, Jesus' career passes beyond that 'of a mere rabbi or even prophet.'" Still, Bacon thinks it is a question whether Jesus admitted the application to himself of strictly Messianic titles and attributes. It could only be "in a purely ethico-religious sense, and only for the preservation of that deepest and most vital element of the Messianic hope—the *sonship* of Israel." "Even if Jesus himself regarded his calling as in some remote sense Messianic, historical criticism may reasonably question whether the direct claim of his Messiahship would ever have been put forth by his disciples had it not first appeared as a malignant imputation of his mortal enemies, in the charge by which they secured his crucifixion from a complacently cruel governor." It is a question "whether, up to the crucifixion itself, the prophet of Nazareth had been seriously regarded as 'the Christ' by even the most ardent disciple." However, the account of the anointing in 14 3-9 is cited as old and as possibly indicating Messianic faith. It was when Jesus was excluded from Galilee, and when he set his face toward Judea, that a new phase of his activity began "which inevitably led to a Messianic outcome, even if he himself had neither the expectation nor ambition of being proclaimed 'the Christ.'" "He foresaw martyrdom, vindicated not by *his own* Coming again, but by the Coming of the Danielic Son of Man." This was to take place "while the evil generation still lived that had slain God's messengers." Jesus could not have used Son of

Man as a favorite self-designation to describe himself as one who was to be brought back from the underworld on the clouds of heaven. The Son of Man of whom he speaks "is simply the conventional figure, not necessarily himself, who is to be the agent of God's vindication in the coming judgment." The view that we find in the gospel is that of the enthusiastic church. Such apocalyptic fanaticism was characteristic of Pharisaism and of the later generation of Jesus' followers, but not "of the sane and well-poised mind of the plain mechanic of Nazareth." Peter, whose stumbling had been most conspicuous, was the first to be converted and after that to strengthen his brethren. It is in his beholding of the risen Christ in apocalyptic glory that the church has its beginning. Bacon would date the second gospel somewhere between 70 and 75 A.D.

Numerous other books that concern themselves more or less directly with the problems of Mark have been published recently, but those already mentioned have perhaps attracted most attention. They have certainly given a new importance and a new interest to the study of the second gospel. This will be granted even by those who still think that we are without sufficient data for determining the exact course of the development of tradition antecedent to Mark, as also by those who continue unshaken in their conviction that there was no development. Of the investigations not previously alluded to which have an important bearing on the present theme, those by the elder Weiss are particularly noteworthy. He develops a view of Luke's special source that would give it a prominent place in the list of primitive authorities and would put us in possession of a Jewish-Christian standard, emanating from Jerusalem, that might be used along with the Discourse-source (Q) for testing and measuring Mark. It is hardly possible at present to forecast the future development of the study of the Synoptic Gospels or to decide how much of the work that has been recently done will prove to be a permanent contribution. Past experience teaches that the large agreement among the writers that we have reviewed as to the character of the Markan sources does not of itself prove the correctness of their general position. No more does their wide divergence in matters of detail disprove their whole method. They have at least

established, with a clearness never before attained, that the second gospel in its structure, compass, and points of view presents problems that call for solution. These problems will continue to challenge the best efforts of Christian scholarship until satisfactory explanations have been found or every resource has been exhausted. Even if the recent discussions shall be held to be inadequate, earnest students of the gospels will not cease to feel their great indebtedness to the patient labor and the rich, devout scholarship of the expert workers in this difficult field. And it must be said that, notwithstanding the marked progress that has been made in many phases of the investigation of the second gospel, it may still be doubted whether we have reached a point where the exact sources upon which it depends can be determined. Possibly this can never be done, even approximately. The whole problem is more difficult and more baffling than some recent discussions might lead one to suppose. That written records lie back of various portions of the Gospel, besides chapter 13 and other discourse-paragraphs, seems *a priori* not unlikely, though it may not be easy to supply certain proof of it. That the writer also used such oral tradition as was suited to his purpose is likewise very probable, though it may be impossible to bring oneself to believe that a gospel of such fulness and completeness could spring into being as a first product of the movement to record oral tradition. The probability seems to be that the second gospel depends in all its parts upon one or the other of these sources, but no written record employed by the evangelist, so far as we know, has survived, and this is the great hindrance which up to the present has not been successfully overcome. Professor Burkitt has pointed out (*The Gospel History and Its Transmission*, pp. 123 and 131) that it is very doubtful whether we could recover Mark if it had been preserved only as a component part of Matthew and Luke. And yet this might be supposed to be an easier task than the reconstruction of one of Mark's own main sources on the basis of internal evidence alone. It has so far proved impossible to get anything like a consensus of opinion regarding the exact form of the Discourse-source (Q), even though we are fortunate enough to possess two documents in which it is supposedly incorporated, and even though we can make some

reasonably certain deductions as to the style and methods of the writers of these documents. The attempts at the literary analysis of other New Testament books, particularly the Book of Acts, where we are also without parallels or any proper basis for comparison, are not of a character to make one hopeful of the outcome in Mark. None of the schemes reviewed, or that have thus far been propounded, promises to be widely accepted, because the evidence is too inadequate and too conflicting. The demonstration hardly ever rises, for any considerable portion of the gospel, above the level of plausible conjecture. The more definite and detailed the scheme, the more questionable it has always proved to be.

The writer of the second gospel apparently did not feel any sense of proprietorship in his material. He nowhere suggests that he is giving testimony as an eye-witness or as the exclusive possessor of important information. He does not feel the necessity, as do the writers of the third and fourth gospels, of making any statement as to his sources. That about which we inquire in this respect was either self-evident or not likely to be of interest to his readers. Apart from ancient tradition, it would hardly occur to any one to suppose that Peter was the exclusive authority for what is narrated. In parts he is a prominent figure, and what is said often centres round his experiences, while certain accounts are most naturally explained as proceeding ultimately from what he recounted; but this is by no means true of the whole gospel. There is much that might possibly go back to his reminiscences, but it might go back equally well to other sources. A literary unity runs through the second gospel, notwithstanding its fragmentary, anecdotal character. We can understand how this might be, for the procedure of the other evangelists and of other New Testament writers, so far as this is discoverable, makes it probable that the sources have not been literally reproduced, but have been treated with great freedom. A clew to the writer's method and characteristics has been sought in the few passages where he speaks in his own person, but they are hardly sufficient to supply this. The editorial comments are in indirect form, and usually appear as admonitions, or as applications of what has been recorded, or as explanations of what might be strange to non-

jewish readers. Nicolardot has recently endeavored to throw light on the evangelist's method by the study of the way in which the Discourse-source (Q) was probably used by him. This is a legitimate procedure, for it is more widely recognized than ever that this source existed early and probably made its contribution to the second gospel. But too much is likely to remain problematical regarding its form and extent, and particularly regarding the form in which it was known and employed by the second evangelist, to make us hopeful of large results from such a method of approach. It cannot be counted strange, in view of what has thus far been achieved, that Wellhausen should doubt whether sections that he regards as of secondary historical character can also be shown to be secondary as regards their literary form.

We have seen that the two most recent writers, Loisy and Bacon, have been guided in their analyses more by the content of the gospel than by its form. And this was also true of Johannes Weiss. The so-called "historico-critical" method has been adopted. The effort has been to observe what is inharmonious or disconnected, to separate out related points of view, and to arrange in order the resulting bodies of material. The difficulty and delicacy of such a task is self-evident. There is always danger that the age, ancestry, and relation of conceptions be mistaken, or that they be made tenants of dwellings not built for their habitation. There is the further possibility that such ideas may have been at home in more than one mind or one community. If the presence of certain forms of the miraculous is made a basis for judgment, it may be questioned whether this of itself gives evidence of the late date which these writers suppose. The position of Harnack is truer,—namely, that modern views of the miraculous cannot be made a criterion to decide what early writers could or could not believe. They looked out of their own eyes, and not through those of men living today. Furthermore, the classification of the contents of the gospel according to our estimate of its character, and the supposition that we can thus establish what stood in different sources, are very questionable. Why may not material of diverse character have had its place in any or all of the evangelist's sources, as well as in his own narrative and in his

own mind? Indeed, after an interval of thirty or forty years, during which it may be presumed that all disciples, even those who had companied with the Master, listened eagerly to all that could be learned, would it not be strange if there were not a mingling of tradition? This remains true, whether we assume that the sources were written, or hold that the evangelist was dependent upon what was treasured in the memory of his informants. Is it probable that interblending could begin only with him? Even such a seemingly certain criterion for analysis as the presence of parallel accounts of the same event may fail us, when there are no other weighty supplemental considerations. Why, for example, should our writer necessarily be the first who failed to identify accounts so evidently duplicate as those of the two feedings of the multitude?

If now to other more or less elusive considerations we add that of the evangelist's interest and purpose, do we get a better basis for our analysis and for properly relating the second gospel to what went before? There is general agreement that the evangelist did not write as a chronicler whose primary interest was to record events. The gospel is far from being a chronicle, or a complete record of Jesus' ministry, and it is hardly conceivable that it could have been the writer's purpose to make it such. It has been estimated that we have incidents from not more than forty of the four hundred days that may be taken as the shortest possible estimate of the duration of Jesus' ministry. What might naturally be anticipated appears actually to have happened. Characteristic and noteworthy incidents and experiences were the ones that were remembered and afterwards most frequently recounted. What the writer seems to present to his readers is a series of brief, often unconnected, sketches of impressive incidents suited to awaken and strengthen faith by acquainting the reader with what was important for understanding the course and development of Jesus' ministry in the light of its outcome. Particular interest is manifested in the close of that ministry and in the last week in Jerusalem. The view that this is the real theme, and that all that is told besides is intended to be contributory thereto, is not an altogether false estimate. The order is, on the whole, chronological, and was evidently intended to be so.

There is a sketch of the early days and the work in Galilee, of the gathering of followers, of the opposition of enemies, of retirement, of the journey to Jerusalem, and of the closing days, but within this general framework the grouping is often topical or suggested by some like principle of association. So far as we can judge, other arrangements of the material would have been equally possible. There is nowhere a statement as to purpose, and yet at the beginning and throughout there seems to be an unmistakable aim, which may be defined as an effort to quicken and confirm faith in Jesus as Messiah, the Son of God. What in the writer's view would best contribute to this end seems to have been singled out for narration. In so far the presence of a tendency may be recognized; and even beyond this, in the adaptation of the narrative to the needs and understanding of the writer's age. To the extent that this was the method of Baur, that method may be said to remain, but to go beyond this and make the controversies, difficulties, and institutions of the early church, or specifically of the church at Rome from 70 to 90 A.D., the key to the contents of the gospel, as is done in Bacon's aetiological method, is another matter. The weighty objections to such a procedure are, of course, not unknown to him, for they have been urged with telling effect against like explanations in the past. The question is whether he has reduced them to silence. One can still hardly avoid the conviction that the motives and tendencies which he discovers in many of the narratives are first read into them, and that a naïve evangelist would be greatly surprised at much of the subtlety that is imputed to him. If what is presented with much brilliancy and suggestiveness is often possible, there are nearly always other possibilities at least equally near at hand. Then, too, the Aramaic foundation and background, if not the Aramaic original, of the evangelical material, is not sufficiently reckoned with. The presence of this element promises to continue one of the strongest arguments against the late date to which much of the Gospel of Mark is assigned by both Loisy and Bacon. It is not possible to limit it to the Discourse-source (Q), as though this alone were Syrian and the narrative matter Roman. But if the gospel tradition took shape in such large measure on the soil of Palestine, it was not at the period nor within the sphere of

influence postulated by the aetiological theory. No more would it originate in the devout faith of a later evangelist. Again, is it supposable that a gospel could have won such general acceptance, displaced other tradition, and become the foundation for writers soon to follow, if it was made up to such an extent of material that had come into being, or had been entirely remoulded, at so late a date? Would not the living witnesses and the early Christian converts, and after forty years these must have been many, have discredited or hindered the acceptance of such accounts? Loisy feels this difficulty, and thinks that we must come down to a time when the main actors, Jews, Christians, and Romans, were no more, and faith was not restrained by the memory of what had actually taken place. But how reconcile this with a gospel showing the influence of the Aramaic, and written about 70 A.D., that told of what must have been often repeated during many years, both by those who were actors in the history and by the larger numbers who had been their auditors? Whatever may be concluded as to the historical facts that lie back of the evangelical tradition, or back of any single section, the high age of the main content of the second gospel seems to be better established today than ever before. Advances in the knowledge of this early period following many lines tend thus far to increase rather than to diminish this possibility.

It may be urged that the Paulinism of the evangelist is against such a conclusion. We have seen that the gospel responds to Bacon's tests for Paulinism in nearly all its parts, and Loisy and others find it impregnated to a lesser extent. Aside from the fact that this same gospel has been found in the past to respond to very different tests, and from the fact that many skilled experimenters today can detect only slight traces of the Pauline element, it may be questioned whether another alternative has been sufficiently reckoned with. What if Paulinism shall be found to contain a strong infusion of primitive Christianity? Or what if it shall turn out that there was a pre-pauline doctrine akin to Paulinism? What if it shall be deemed wise eventually to confine the differences between the great apostle to the gentiles and his fellow-christians more nearly to the points that he himself mentions? Most of the arguments used by Bacon for Mark's

Paulinism may be, and have been, urged in favor of its primitive character. Especially is this true of the main argument, the form of the evangelist's message. What need could be earlier felt or more fundamental than the defence of Jesus' Messiahship? Does it seem probable that the apostles and elders of Jerusalem could presuppose faith in Christ rather than aim to produce it, that the didactic element in the tradition would be the all-important one for the churches of Palestine? Furthermore, does not the attitude toward the Jews, and the picture of the apostles, and of Jesus' kindred, suit an earlier age much better than any later one? Have we adequate reasons for substituting another historical background for one so well fitted to account for what follows? Are not the changes of the later Synoptists best explained as modifications of this earlier setting? It is evident that, prior to the question of the relation of Mark to primitive Christian tradition, there is the question of the relation of Paul to those who were apostles and disciples before him. If the second evangelist gives some evidence of being influenced by Pauline thought and teaching, this cannot be accounted strange. That, however, he was a pronounced partisan of the apostle, and that this motive shaped, yes, created his narrative, or even that such an influence is clearly traceable to any great extent, can hardly be said thus far to have been established. The assertion that we should have a very different gospel if it had been written by such a Paulinist, and according to the methods he is supposed to have employed, is not unfounded. To say that his Paulinism is that of a layman, that it was superficial, imperfect, and in part mistaken, hardly disposes of this objection. We thus conclude that the evidences of tendency and purpose hitherto adduced are not sufficient to give us important aid in separating out the sources of the second gospel from its present final form.

There is general agreement among the investigators named in this article, and among many others not mentioned, that we should look first of all to the second gospel itself rather than to the tradition of its origin for answers to the questions under discussion. The soundness of this position will probably be generally conceded. The gospel will continue to stand for what it is found to be in itself, whoever was the author or compiler. This does

not mean that the tradition of the Markan authorship is to be dismissed as without value. Indeed, it is generally accepted today in some form by eminent and impartial scholars. Johannes Weiss gives more attention to the question than do most recent writers on Mark. The difficulties and conflicting accounts in the oldest tradition, the question whether a distinction should be made between the author Mark and the John Mark of the New Testament, between the Mark of Peter and the Mark of Paul, are considered by him at length, and he finds the evidence such that he is willing neither to reject the prevailing assumption of their identity nor to affirm it. On the whole, he thinks the gospel best explained as coming from one who was a pupil of Peter and of Paul.

There is as much difference of opinion as ever as to the conclusion of Mark. Do the last twelve verses, which are so evidently from another and later hand, replace an ending that was accidentally lost, or one that was suppressed, or one that for some reason was never written? To these views, each of which has its advocates, we may add the further one, to which Loisy subscribes, that the gospel may have ended abruptly with 16 8, as it has come down to us in the oldest manuscripts. He finds it conceivable that the evangelist may have regarded the empty tomb, supplemented possibly by the account of the transfiguration, as the most convincing proof of the resurrection. He admits as possible the view that the evangelist contemplated a further narrative which was never written or has been lost. Bacon believes that the end of the gospel has been cancelled, either for dogmatic reasons or from lack of harmony with other accounts, and that the substitutes for this that have come down to us were supplied about 140 A.D. He says further, "It is as certain as anything in the field of critical conjecture can be that our evangelist's story once went on to relate the substance of the early narrative of Acts, and may even have wound up, as Acts does, with the planting of the gospel in *Rome*" (p. xix). Elsewhere he suggests that if the Roman evangelist himself did not continue his gospel, then we must suppose that there was current "some narrative corresponding to the more radical of the two main sources employed in Acts, perhaps represented in degenerate form in the later

'Acts,' 'Predications,' and 'Peregrinations' of Peter and Paul" (p. 234). Others, for example Zahn, are inclined to conjecture that our evangelist at least contemplated another and perhaps more extended writing, but Zahn does not express the degree of certainty regarding this that we find in Bacon. We may say that most scholars hold that the second gospel must have had some ending other than the present, but the hypothesis that the writer must have gone, or contemplated going, beyond the limits of the first, third, and fourth gospels, has far less probability, if it has any whatever.

Besides the question of the relation of Mark to Peter and to the Discourse-source (Q), there arises the further problem of its relation to the Johannine tradition, but up to the present this has not been widely discussed. Other points also, as yet little canvassed, will doubtless in due time assume a new importance. Meanwhile the progress recently made in the investigation of the second gospel and in the solution of the Synoptic Problem must be accounted most encouraging.

JESUS AND HIS MODERN CRITICS

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As our buildings today bear the impress of Greek genius in architecture, and our law in great measure holds the form that was given it under the Roman Empire, so do religion and morals with us still feel the influence of the Jew. Through Christianity that strain of spiritual life which had been nurtured under a great line of Hebrew prophets was taken over to and planted in the new soil of Graeco-Roman life: so that its heroes finally displaced the heroes of classical antiquity and its forms of thought, in part at least, superseded those which belonged by natural inheritance to pagan faith. The beginner of the movement which accomplished this change was Jesus of Nazareth, who thus made himself one of the foremost figures in the world's affairs.

As part of this process of getting itself rooted in a new habitat, and by way of adaptation to alien conditions, Christianity underwent considerable modification of form. First it was worked over into somewhat different shape in the mind of Paul. Petrine Christianity, no doubt, was held strictly within Judaic lines, and was designed only for "home consumption." The Pauline form introduced changes which better fitted it for a "foreign market." A later and more profound change was made by those influences which our fourth gospel represents. In this new guise it was such a different thing that it became thenceforth, almost of necessity, a stranger in the house of its birth. These modifications of it, innocently assumed to be its original shape, have lived on till our own day.

And now a new force is being brought to bear upon it whose ultimate effect we cannot wholly measure. The new science of historical criticism has come into this field, possessing an equipment and a determination which blind tradition will be unable to resist. One of the first facts to attract its attention was that

change of form which Christianity had undergone in getting itself transformed from Eastern to Western life; and one of its first problems was to retranslate these later versions of its message back into a primitive gospel.

This has been a problem of no small size; because, for one thing, our sources of information about the land and the people in the time of Christ are none too abundant; and also because the earliest literature of Christianity which we possess comes from that period in which its transplanting had been partially effected. Nevertheless, historical criticism has made substantial progress with its task; and the great ferment produced by such conclusions as it has already announced is evidence enough of marked changes in the life of the church that are yet to be enforced.

None of us can see with perfect clearness what is going forward in the church of our day. Still, it is well for us to use what wisdom we have to get our proper bearings under the forces that are shaping the thought of the age. This new science has demonstrations to make, and in the end is very sure to triumph over every kind of opposition.

In making some estimate of what historical criticism has done or is likely to do for Christianity, our first question is what (if anything) it gives us as the spring and source out of which this spiritual movement originally came. So far as it can go behind Greek and Pauline forms of Christian faith, what does it find to be the historic reality which they worked over into the tradition of later times? Our second question concerns the worth of this historic basis to the modern world, and the probable future of the church having that for a foundation.

First, is there anything in the early Christian tradition which can be received and held as valid history? Because at the present time there is considerable disposition to look upon the whole gospel story as a fabric of myths; so largely spun and woven out of subjective idealism that any element of fact it contains may be treated as a negligible quantity. Thus Mr. Anderson, in the *Hibbert Journal* for January of this present year, takes the position that almost nothing of the real story of Jesus of Nazareth is now recoverable. He seems to imply indeed that,

if we could recover it, it might be found too poor or cheap to deserve serious consideration. Meanwhile what we actually have in our possession is a great spiritual drama evolved out of the inner consciousness of the Early Church; a purely fictitious creation embodying only certain deep insights of the human soul.

This view of the case appears to be, in its origin, a gigantic bluff made by the upholders of traditional creeds in order to save their citadel from further attack; and one observes with mingled sorrow and amusement how well the bluff seems to work. The Christian world has stood these many centuries, without question, on the historic basis of its faith. Now comes this new authority, which the church has learned it cannot altogether ignore, to tell it that, as it understands the life of Christ, that narration is not history. What shall the church answer to this assertion?

Naturally enough many are now replying, "Well, why after all do we require any historic basis? The beautiful symbol is worth more than any mere narrative of fact. We freely give you whatever you can extract from your higher criticism and your historical research. It is not much that you can reclaim from the dust heaps of the past; but, whatever it is, take it for your pains, and make the most of it. We cling to that mighty structure which we know as Christianity, and which, of whatever substance it may be composed, is better than anything to be put together out of the fragments of what you are pleased to call historic truth."

It is a good bluff, bravely put on, and for a time will suffice to hold the fort. It is rather amusing, however, to see other people, always on the hunt for some last new thing, taking up this subterfuge and solemnly proclaiming it as that great discovery which shows us the next step of the world's advance. Because, as a matter of fact, the only body of opinion which can be regarded in this matter as having some weight of authority stands uncaptured and undismayed by this idea of the mythical origin of Christianity.

The historical students themselves, who have raised all this rumpus, have as a class never swerved from the conviction with

which they began,—that something once happened in Judea rather out of the common order of events to give Christianity its start, and that they could find out with some approach to accuracy what that happening was. They are the experts in this investigation. Their feeling about historical reality is worth any amount of loose popular conjecture; and, on the whole, they give no aid and comfort whatever to the notion that the gospel story grew up out of the imagination of a religious cult in the Graeco-Roman world. Their opinion ought to go far to settle the matter, at least until some new discovery is made; and if we pay heed to the reasons they have to give for the faith that is in them, we certainly shall not join in the cry of a distressed orthodoxy,—that, since there is no historical basis we are free to choose the best poetry within our reach.

The fact that the story, as it now stands, contains parts of a somewhat different story, inconsistent with the purpose for which the later version was proposed, is evidence enough that it is a revamped narrative of fact, not a mere fanciful drama of the soul. Schmiedel's "nine foundation pillars" have never been removed, and they are not likely to be overturned. Moreover, students of the gospel narrative are deeply impressed that the shadings of the story are often too subtle to be reasonably ascribed to a legendary source. The absence of contemporary witnesses in the general literature of the time is easily accounted for. The career of Jesus was not likely to attract the notice of historians of the age. It was too brief, too obscure, too little attended by any portent or disturbance to have found its way into their chronicles.

Altogether the scholarship best entitled to our confidence tells us that Jesus of Nazareth really lived, and that the main outline of his life-story is about as valid history as any record of the past that we possess.

It is not proposed here to set forth that story as understood by scholars of the present day. Suffice it to say, in general terms, that he is now presented to us as a man of his time rather than as a kind of universal king. He has been regarded as one who not only saw life from the divine point of view, but as one who saw it with divine omniscience of all its future and its past. It has been

thought that in all his teaching he was consciously legislating for the whole world of men. Although through his mother he was doubtless of Jewish birth, it has not been supposed that there was anything of the Jew in his mental and moral make-up. In the Christian imagination he has been a "man without a country"; one without special attachment to any national tradition, holding all races equally in his regard.

Modern scholarship places his life once more in its true setting as that of the latest and greatest among Hebrew prophets. It makes him first of all a loyal son of Israel, a child of the age which bore him. It sees him immersed in the ideas and struggles and ambitions of his own people. It does not suppose that he knew much about the world beyond the borders of his native land, and it does affirm that he saw life with such eyes as his Jewish ancestry had given him. This, in a broad way, is the change that modern thought has made in the picture of his mind and his career.

It is a change from which many infer that the story of his life is now practically discharged of its whole significance. What can a Jew of the first century have to say to us of the twentieth century? The world in which he lived has passed away. Many at least of its ideas have become obsolete. How is it possible that one who believed, for instance, in demoniacal possession can instruct or enlighten the man of today?

But if we make too much of the limitations of time and place, we destroy the value of historic instances altogether. Does one say it is another world which has come into existence since his day? Yes! But it is a very different world that has arisen since Washington's day. We do not consider his words entirely out of date. Or, since we are near the centennial anniversary of another famous man, we may remind ourselves of the impression that widely prevails as of a new heaven and a new earth that have come into being since Theodore Parker's day. Are we not frequently told that Darwinism has revolutionized the whole world of thought?

The truth is, however, that if a man be big enough in his own place, he is never out of date for those who have discernment enough to see somewhat beneath the fashion of the garments that he wears. What is of the moment in his life and

thought is of slight importance, as compared with qualities that fit every age; and therefore possesses monumental significance for all who come after him. To say that because a man is deeply absorbed in the situation of the world as he knows it, or of that little part of it only with which he is immediately concerned; and that because he does not see with perfect accuracy what the outcome of his life-struggle is to be, therefore his example can set no beacon for other men to observe in the different trains of circumstance with which they are involved, amounts to saying that no great life of the past can teach us anything.

Now, to speak of nothing else, we may specify four instances in which the thought of Jesus rose to the very highest level of human consciousness; reached a height indeed which, so far as we can see, stands as the topmost summit of human thinking. First, his thought of God is ideally perfect. Religion has never found and never will find a better object of worship. His "Father in Heaven," as depicted in the matchless parables of the gospels, marks an ultimate achievement of religious idealism. Secondly, his thought of man as God's child is equally sublime. The unfolding of that thought discloses the loftiest ideas of human nature that the mind can form. And it is evident that he did unfold the thought; it was with him no mere "glittering generality." Thirdly, his teaching about the relation that should exist between God and man leaves nothing to be desired. Even his practical sagacity in counselling the soul how it should find this right solution remains of immense consequence to all students of the higher life; though in the nature of the case such counsels change as conditions vary. Finally, in finding love to be the heart and essence of all right relationship between man and man, Jesus rose to the highest reach of spiritual attainment. In this direction nothing is to be had better than he has given us.

And it takes nothing from his glory to say that these ideas have found expression again and again in the course of man's spiritual development; any more than it cheapens the beauty of some great model of female loveliness to say that other women have eyes and lips and noses of the same general pattern. There the ideas are in the mind of Jesus in what we can only regard as their perfect form. We know not how to improve upon his

statement of a single one of them. We have no reason to say that he borrowed them from any source whatever. They grew out of his own life; and they are among the very greatest things that could grow out of any life.

Of the thought thus briefly sketched I am ready to say, in the language of another (Professor Henry Jones), "Its central truth was so great and its consequences so momentous that it contains the substantial virtue and essence of all idealism." It seems to me that this writer gives us what is sure to be the ultimate verdict of rational criticism when he goes on to say, "It was the boldest idealism, and it was the most unflinchingly held in the face of every doubt and every tragedy, that was ever taught to man." "No man ever lived who was more deeply possessed by a great thought, or who lived in its service and its power with such sublime consistency, and with such an all-challenging courage."

The person of whom such words may be justly and fitly spoken surely stands in the highest rank among great souls of the past; and in view of such supreme excellence, in mind and character, the attempt to show defects in his ethical or religious sense appears to me trivial. It may be granted that he cherished some mistaken expectation of a return to earth to finish in person the work which he had begun. In this his mind was probably swayed by the current Messianic dream. But in this he was no common fanatic, and he professed no very clear foresight of the coming time.

Moreover this expectation produced little, if any, appreciable effect upon the character of his moral teaching; for the charge that his precepts have only an *ad interim* quality, and are largely vitiated by his belief in the coming end of the world (to which approaching catastrophe alone they were designed to run), is simply absurd. Every reasonable mind knows that he was constantly busy trying to illustrate, by word and deed, what he considered the kingdom of heaven to be. He had a splendid vision, both of individual and of social righteousness, which was always foremost in his thoughts. It was no vision that he could set forth in formal rules, such as the scribes and rabbis loved, but one that he sought to convey by parable and paradox

and glowing allegory, that his disciples might catch the spirit of it all. So clearly was this the main purpose of his life and so much was he intent upon it, that in summing up his moral and religious precepts any views that he held about a "second coming" may be safely left out of the reckoning.

With regard to the claim that he was the Christ, the Messiah of God, it is difficult to see how this can be justly turned against him. The critics here are not yet agreed as to the facts, some doubt being entertained whether he did make that claim. But he was crucified for something, and the fear and distrust of him which produced that judicial murder seem rather inexplicable unless he had set up, more or less openly, a Messianic claim. But is any one in position to say that this was a mistake on his part? Surely the Messianic idea played a great part in the early history of the new faith. If there is a Providence in the affairs of men, may not this have been a part of it? Meantime it is highly significant that in his use of this idea he so spiritualized the popular hope as to transform a rather cheap and tawdry picture of millennial glory into an ideal on which the spiritual vision can still linger with delight.

These questions, as to his Messiahship and his expectation of the approaching end of the world, are well worth talking about; though one does not see that they have much bearing on that religious idealism which was his great gift to subsequent time. When, however, it comes down to the criticism which alleges that in giving his indignation against the Pharisees free rein, or that in what he said in answer to a question about divorce he displayed a lack of regard for womankind,—is not that rather poor stuff? However interesting it may be to those who produce it, it will probably never enter into the world's serious thought.

One consideration alone lends to it a kind of momentary relevance. The Christian world now entertains a purely theoretical belief in the absolute sinlessness of Christ. There is no possible way to establish the accuracy of that belief. Even if we had a full record of every thought and every deed of his life, so many different moral estimates of that record would be likely to arise that complete sinlessness would lie beyond the realm of convincing demonstration. From what we know of the mind

of Christ we gain an impression of the greatest moral purity. Whether he stood entirely without fault we can only say as we make that assertion an article of pure faith.

Some people, it would seem, are much annoyed when instances of such faith are brought under their notice, and feel an irresistible impulse to shatter it. But, really, to go after such game as this is not much better than the hunting of the snark. There is a strong tendency in human nature to deal in superlatives, and to say "most" when it only means "very much." The dogma of the sinlessness of Christ can have no other reasonable meaning than that of the words ascribed to Pilate, "I find no fault in him." Is it worth while to attack that dogma by seeking to find some small instance in which Jesus was possibly wrong? In that kind of shot there may be a sharp recoil, and some question may arise at which end of the gun most damage is likely to be done. Fault-finding of a petty sort removes attention from those greater things where emphasis belongs. One may signalize his own independence of mind in this fashion; but for my part I think no other form of color-blindness is worse than that which sees only the strong red and green of courage and intellectual honesty, as if the moral spectrum contained no other colors.

One who undertakes to do damage to what in the eyes of others is a great ideal, should be very sure of just pretext for his action. And this consideration may lead us to take up the other question with which we began: What is the worth of this life of Jesus to the modern world? How does it matter whether or not there is a Jesus of history, and of what importance is he to the religion of this and the coming time? To go at once to the heart of this question, probably one's sense of the worth of the personality of Christ will depend much upon his sense of the value of personal influence in the general life of mankind. This is so large a theme that we cannot here follow it outside the limits of our immediate field of inquiry.

It becomes more and more evident, as the various religions of the world are better understood, that the one unique possession of Christianity has been the picture it has cherished of its Founder's character and career. Its ideas are to be found paralleled or

parodied on every hand. Scholars are at a loss to say why Christianity has survived, when other faiths have perished, if the explanation must be limited to the kinds of religious belief which have been held and advocated. To go back to the beginning, we are told by those who ought to know that, so far as moral and religious teachings are concerned, it is somewhat puzzling to determine why the name of Rabbi Hillel should have fallen into obscurity, while that of Jesus rose to commanding fame. Unless we are content to stay in that last ditch of unreason, provided for us by the supposition that things merely happened thus and so, we are driven to the assertion that there was something in the personality of Jesus which appealed to men, as the personality of that other Jewish teacher did not.

When we take up the work of Paul, we see at once how it all centred in the person of Christ. It is true that his writings contain little reference to incidents in the life of Jesus. Whether or not he was familiar with what eye-witnesses had to say on this subject, that earthly life appears to have been mostly of secondary consequence to him, as compared with the impression of a spiritual Jesus that was somehow burned into his soul on the way to Damascus. Still, however conceived, the figure of Jesus rose above everything else in his regard; and it was the figure of a person of unquestioned reality. We may now say, if we like, that his idea of Jesus was more or less a dream. It needs to be remembered, however, that this is not at all the view which Paul himself held. Jesus Christ was to him no mere bright ideal of human excellence, but a most real and vivid personality; one who had walked the earth and suffered death upon the cross. Had it been otherwise, no shade of Saul of Tarsus would now haunt the memory of travellers who wander over the ruins of Ephesus, or stand on Mars' Hill at Athens.

Coming to the period, later than Paul, when Christianity was competing with Mithraism and the worship of Isis for supremacy throughout the Roman Empire, what shall we say determined that struggle? Note the words of Professor Emerton, a wise and careful student. "Christianity," he says, "shared with these other cults the concentration of thought upon one single redeeming

personality. But the immense and decisive difference was that this personality was, in the Christian scheme, not merely a divine abstraction requiring to be represented by symbols and sacrifices, but also an absolute and perfect historical human being. That was the one fundamental fact which not all the speculations of all the theological schools could obscure."

Here is an opinion to tie to amid the floods of loose talk with which the world is deluged, for one may judge it to be an opinion that will hold. It would be easy enough to supplement this with a great array of competent observers and witnesses whose testimony would be that, in their judgment, throughout the whole life of the church the personality of Jesus had exercised commanding power. Christianity is, of course, a highly complex affair. But the real key to the combination of those elements of which it is composed, the key which thus far has guaranteed the stability of that combination, is the person of Christ.

What other view of religious history is reasonable in the light of what we know of the natural behavior of men? Everywhere and at all times a great personality is the best rallying-point which the units of the social mass can find, about which to gather. It is hard for these units to combine and stay together within the bond of common belief. Differences of thought soon arise to drive them apart; and so strong is this disruptive influence that no organization long endures apart from allegiance to those persons who represent to the common mind its spirit and purpose.

It has become a kind of instinct with men to follow such personal leadership in political affairs. They have a feeling of helplessness without it. When the name of some prominent leader has become a rallying cry for the masses, many who would be glad to get rid of him are afraid to let him go, realizing the difficulty of transferring this loyalty to any other object. Let any one who thinks that personalism is of slight consequence in a democracy study Bryanism and what it stands for. It is not that any one man can, by his own might, so "bestride the narrow world like a Colossus"; it is that many men who desire to stand and act together find often in personal allegiance not merely their strongest but their only bond.

A great personality is for the common mind its best symbol

of the things it most cares for; its most comprehensive and satisfactory definition of such spiritual values as are precious in its sight. And this appears to be true whether it be the prize-fighters' world or the communion of saints which is taken for purposes of illustration. It ought not, therefore, to be to us a singular phenomenon that the great religions of this world are so associated with the names of their founders, and that this personal influence of these men has remained so much the life and strength of all their following.

To my own mind the problem of the future of Christianity presents itself in very simple guise. It is mainly the question whether that Jesus of history, now presented by modern scholars to the thought of the church, can serve, as the half-mythological figure of Christ has served in time past, to inspire and unite men for such work as the Church is set to do. If the proper answer to this question be an affirmative one, then I should hold it probable that we stand at the beginning of a new development of Christianity, of quite as much worth to the world as any phase of it which lies behind us. If, on the other hand, this question must be answered in the negative, then I should say that nothing is left to this ancient spiritual movement but gradual retirement from the world's affairs. In that case it would perhaps be most fitting for those of us who profess to be Christians, of what is called the "liberal" kind, to look at each other with what Emerson once called "eyes of speculation," and wonder what we are doing "in this gallery."

I do not say that I know what answer to this question the future will give. I do say that there is ground for a reasonable hope and faith in the possibility of starting Christianity upon a new career; and I declare that, in the sight of those who are willing to commit themselves to that venture, there is a goal to be reached, a prize to be won, which is one of the most splendid inducements ever offered to the courage and loyalty of human hearts. The rebirth of the Christian religion is a magnificent dream. If, through the preaching of a Jesus of history, this renewal of its life can be accomplished, that is a possibility of stupendous significance. And to make trial and test of this possible opening to a larger future seems to me, above everything else, the desig-

nated task of those who now occupy the extreme left wing of Protestantism.

The movements which hold that position began in deep attachment and loyalty to what they understood to be the historic Christ. Down to a very recent time this continued to be a distinguishing feature of their faith. Of late there has come some change; a change sufficiently indicated perhaps by a sentence in one of Mr. Robert's articles, where he says that "the supreme need of the hour, in these matters, is the disengagement of religion from its dependence on historical personalities." At least one probably does not misconstrue the feeling of a certain number of Unitarians, at this time, when one says that they really want to get away from Jesus. He does not mean much to them. They would prefer to cease talking about him, and they are somewhat inclined to suspect insincerity in those who do like to talk of him.

This change may be due to a variety of causes. With us, here in New England, transcendentalism very likely began it. The remedy for Emerson's one-sidedness is generally to be found somewhere in his other-sidedness. But his disciples do not always look for this remedy, and some of his sayings have produced a quite disproportionate effect on their minds. Then, many have been somewhat carried away by the dream of universal religion. To universal religion the Hegelian formula that "being and non-being are identical," appears to be peculiarly applicable. Strip away that particular religious feeling which is the distinguishing face of any existing type of faith, and what is left may be a skeleton of philosophy, more or less identical with other similar skeletons in other kindred faiths; but of religion, in any proper sense of that word, nothing then survives. Of all "forlorn hopes" that of turning Christianity into universal religion is about the most hopeless.

Mysticism has to some seemed the way out. But while we may say of the mystics, in the words of Mark Antony, that they are "all honorable men," we have no reason to think that in the world, as we are called to deal with it, mysticism can ever be a great popular faith. If we are by way of caring anything about large world-movements, or ambitious in any wise to make

our lives count toward the shaping of currents of history, then the ruling purpose with which, for example, Unitarianism began remains the one sure guiding star of "advanced" Christian communions. It is quite certain that whatever new development Christianity is capable of attaining will be brought forth only among those who profess heartfelt allegiance to Jesus of Nazareth.

The attempt to enthrone a Jesus of history, where the Christ of theology has stood, should commend itself to sober minds by the fact that it is in no sense revolutionary. It is the central purpose of Protestantism reasserting itself under the changed conditions of the present day. Protestants have insisted all along that they would only know their Christ as the New Testament actually revealed him. Now comes the time when a new reading of the original documents of our faith compels a new interpretation of them. As Protestants, we must hold to this new knowledge, once we are convinced that modern scholars know what they are talking about. Why should not that simple determination point the way for the church to a new era of constructive triumphs? No doubt they who seem to see a path in this direction will still have to encounter much ridicule. But so many mighty Nimrods have gone forth to hunt liberal Christianity out of existence, its speedy demise has been so often predicted and its funeral has been so many times appointed, that some of us are no longer much frightened by the presence of these cheerful undertakers on the scene. For a plant which is on the verge of extinction liberal Christianity manifests a surprising vigor of growth, in an astonishing number of places.

Of course, when one says that the new Jesus of history can be made to take the place of that Christ which theology has known, he does not mean that any personality, merely as it stands in the critical intelligence of the time, can fill that high office. Men do not dissect their heroes, or treat them like specimens in a museum. In a way they do and must idealize the great persons of history. They must use their imagination, that is to say, to make these characters once more living realities. They will see through the medium of their own affection and reverence any life which greatly appeals to them. May we not become too superstitious

about the "thing in itself"? All things, as we know them, are a compound of qualities which they themselves possess, and of other qualities which reside in the seeing mind. We cannot live without idealism, and it is only a question on what basis of reality our idealism stands. In fact, so far as moral and spiritual affairs are concerned, realism can perform for us no decent service save as it makes the foundation on which a nobler idealism is built.

Historical research, unaided, will not give us a supreme personality such as a great religion seems to demand. But it should be possible for criticism to revise and correct the picture of such a personality without destroying it. No Jesus of history, it is true, will be worth much to coming time unless men are to love him for what he was and what he did. But suppose that love builds anew this ancient image of what a true son of God should be; why should it be calmly assumed that this image is valueless without those precise theological adornments which schoolmen have added to it? At least this lack of worth remains to be proved, and the issue is not yet so far tried out as to justify the lofty scorn with which many affect to regard it.

It is quite possible that men will learn to love Jesus of Nazareth all the more, when they come to see him as one of their own kind; a man with a great word of God in his heart, who died to impart that word to a world which he deeply loved. It is only a few fragments of his life-story which we possess; but they are just those fragments which were first found useful to perpetuate the image of his personality, and out of which, even now, that image can be most easily produced. What does the ordinary man know of Lincoln or Napoleon, save a few anecdotes through which the character of these famous men is revealed? When history has done her best to set forth the whole career of some favorite child of fortune, a half-dozen incidents in which he figured may lend the imagination more help than volumes of laborious record and description. As such incidents in the life of Jesus have been told, over and over, they have taken deep hold of the heart of the Christian world, and an immense amount of pure sentiment has sprung up in answer to the appeal thus made. Surely we are the most foolish of mortals if we now allow that sentiment to go to waste.

One trouble is, perhaps, that we are apt to get more interested in correcting our neighbors than in attending to our own affairs. We see them doing various unwarrantable things, and we get so excited about this that we forget to study how our work should best be done. Let me appeal in this matter from Philip drunk to Philip sober; from the critic who, when he is fighting orthodoxy, thinks religion ought to be "disengaged from historical personalities," to this same critic when in calmer mood he has a clearer vision of fixed values. "Is Jesus to be blamed," he asks, "for the dismal tragedies of the Christian centuries?" And then he says: "For my own part I answer quite frankly,—most assuredly he is not. He, assuming his historicity, has held up the ideal. Amid the savageries of egoism, we catch the vision of a Selfless One; we hear the calm, sweet voice which tells of peace and joy. With that Vision Beautiful at its heart, Christendom may hope to live down its ape and tiger elements."

There, I am persuaded, the voice of wisdom speaks. In theory, Jesus has been these many centuries the guide and pattern of the Christian world. In so far, however, as the attempt has been seriously made to follow his precepts, they have generally been construed in too narrow and literal fashion; and always this endeavor has been much hindered by a mediatorial scheme of Christendom's own devising. To make him now the real spiritual hero of his church, as childhood is sure to find somewhere in the life surrounding it an adorable image of what it would like to be; to make the common mind truly in love with the kind of man that Jesus was, appears to me one of the most desirable ends that can possibly be reached.

His intensely personalistic gospel is a veritable specific for the faults and weaknesses of a mechanical age. His unwavering trust in the winning power of the spirit is a much-needed correction of the popular illusion that only compulsory forces count. His devotion to an ideal, which it may require ages yet to work out, is an immense steadying influence to that impatience which thinks that the world ought to be made all over, like a pair of shoes, while we wait. His passion for reality, his contempt for the whole art of keeping up appearances, his tenderness toward sins of weakness, and his hatred for every form of

cruelty,—all this constitutes a ceaseless rebuke for that Pharisaism which is, on the whole, the deadliest foe to man's higher life.

His thought of God means life and purity to the whole world's religious faith. His words are deep wells of wisdom, out of which mankind can never cease to draw the water of life. Our race will not forget him, or turn away from him; and there is no eminence to which the modern man can climb from which he can look down upon this Carpenter of Nazareth.

THE INFLUENCE OF DEMOCRACY UPON RELIGION

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During the last five hundred years there has been taking place throughout the world a fundamental revolution in government,—first as to its actual condition, and secondly as to its theory; for that and not the reverse is always the order of development. Up to that time in each community the mass of people, with rare exceptions, had been governed by a few, with one man at their head. The change, which came slowly, consisted in the rise of the governed from passive acquiescence into active participation, the recognition of this as rightful, and the growth of ability among the people for governing. This up-swelling tide, surging everywhere, has been defined by one of its ablest exponents as “government of the people, by the people, for the people.”

According to this theory government arises out of the people. It is not a system imposed on them *ab extra*, which they must accept whether they like it or not, and to which their only duty is obedience. It is founded in their own hearts, minds, wills. Instead of being their master who takes them by the shoulder and makes them walk in the path, whether wisely or unwisely, prescribed, a governor is their agent, whose business is appointed by them and whom they intrust with its execution. Rulers are therefore, on this theory, not autonomous but representative, with powers limited and defined. Government becomes more or less constitutional, with arbitrariness more or less eliminated. There is established a responsibility of the governors to the source of their power—the governed; and government becomes not only of the people but by the people.

It is also for the people. Their welfare is the only object it may legitimately have. Undemocratic government has always aimed at furthering the interests either of a class or of an institution. The pomp and wealth of kings or of their nobles, and the

comfort of those who could rise above their fellows, were accepted by high and low alike as the natural objects of government. Or all interests were subordinated to the advancement of the ruling family, the State, the Church, of the institution, whatever it was, which wielded the machinery of government. The individual as such had no or few rights. He existed for the sake of the institution. Democracy, on the other hand, holds that institutions exist for the sake of individuals; that the welfare of all men and every man is the only legitimate object of human society, and that government therefore must be not only of the people and by the people but for the people.

Such a shifting of the centre of gravity in the State has of course had a profound influence upon the Church; for the upper and the nether springs are fed from the same source. Heaven and earth react upon each other. We are told that in the beginning God made man in His own image. History shows that men ever since have been making God in their own image; that is, men have always attributed to their gods the conditions which seemed to them the highest. Where brute power has held sway, some Baal-embodiment of force has been worshipped. Where the indulgence of appetite has been a thing to be envied, Bacchus and Venus in low forms or in high have been in the Pantheon. The impress of the Roman Empire upon early Christianity was profound. Under it God became a magnified emperor, dealing out arbitrary rewards and punishments, while the Atonement was a legal contract between the First and Second Persons of the Trinity. Every rise in civilization has gone on and registered itself in men's conception of God. So mighty a current of thought as the swing towards democracy in government must therefore have had a profound influence upon theology and upon the constitution of the Church.

This influence has been by no means wholly beneficial; for democracy has brought with it the defects of its excellences. In its recognition of the worth of each individual there lies a tendency to blur distinctions, and so to lower all moral judgments to a level. The yawning valleys of human evil are obligingly exalted, and the mountainous standards of righteousness are made conveniently low. The eternal hostility between right and wrong

tends to melt away in a kindly tolerance, and the problem of sin to have little interest for such theology as remains. An easy-going optimism insists that there is no such thing as permanent loss, since God is too amiable to hurt anybody. I am not sure but the Church has aided this tendency by sounding too exclusively that key-note of the Gospel—"God is Love." It is indeed the key-note, and it is a veritable gospel to those who can understand it. But to those whose ideal of love is low, it is likely to mean the easy-going good nature they have seen in indulgent parents or little-demanding friends. It is the tragedy of great phrases that their very greatness by making them common makes them outworn. They need translation in order to be freshened, brightened, sharpened. So we must set forth love's highly demanding nature, its sternness, its moral passion, or else we must cease to take for granted that the glory of the gospel will be apprehended when we sum it up in "God is Love."

It is but a different aspect of this same democratic tendency—to regard one thing as equally good with another—when we see that the religion inspired by it lays little emphasis upon any imperative. If every man's opinion has a right to existence, there is no need for authority, indeed there is no such thing as authority. Why have recourse to specialists when every man knows enough to get along? An absolute, an eternal, a "Thou shalt," the mind taught by democracy has become almost incapable of hearing. What it needs is the message of the prophet Ezekiel: "Go, get thee unto the children of thy people and speak unto them and tell them, Thus saith the Lord God!" Do we ask what else he was to say? Nothing; that was the whole of it. A bookful of details indeed follows; but they were all summed up and embodied in this one message—that there is a God, whose word is imperative. Such a recognition of ultimate authority is what the scientific tendency of the last half-century has been insisting upon in its inculcation of reverence for the fact. It is what the easy popular religion of the day tends to smile upon lightly. Democracy may be right in insisting that the abode of this ultimate authority is not outside men's mind and soul but is within it; and theology is certainly right in insisting that being within the soul, it is none the less of God. But both unite in solemnly

declaring that it is of vital importance to all men that they should acknowledge an imperative and know that there is a God in Israel.

Democracy claims that the ultimate authority in government is of the people. This has therefore lent strength to the claim for religion that it is immanent, that is, having its base in the heart and mind of humanity. It is true that the doctrine of the immanence of God was enunciated by the Alexandrine theologians long before democracy appeared as a force in the world. But the time then was not ripe for it, and it disappeared for a thousand years, except to the discerning few, under the dominant fervor of transcendence and Augustinianism. But at the Renaissance democracy and immanence shyly emerged and went hand in hand. Religion came then to be regarded less as a system handed down from above than as an ideal towards which the thoughts and desires of men were up-reaching. Even in the heart of the Church in the early centuries there had dwelt the recognition of the human soul as the cave from which issued divine oracles. The Bible was guaranteed by the Church. The Church was the blessed company of all faithful people. The test of truth was, "*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus creditum est.*" For a long time, however, this inward revelation was regarded as no revelation at all in the proper sense of the word, but as a realm of wholly human knowledge distinct from knowledge divinely given. The latter, Revelation properly so called, came wholly from without and was guaranteed by the Church, according to the Roman Catholics; by the Bible, according to the Protestants. The realm of inward revelation had no standing with the orthodox, but was held to be either opposed to revealed truth or to be a separate sphere wholly apart from it. It is only within the last half-century that these have been recognized as not two but one. Revelation and discovery are but different aspects of the same process. When we emphasize the human agency in the coming of truth to the soul, we call it discovery; when we emphasize the divine agency, we call it revelation; and both statements are correct.

The thought of our time, scientific, literary, theologic, cannot be understood unless we recognize not only the divine and the human but the divine in the human. If God made man in his

own image, then the spirit in man is, as the Hebrew poet said, the candle of the Lord; and the light it sheds is part of the incarnate Light of the world. Democracy has been in this respect a John the Baptist, preparing the way for the dispensation of the spirit. Out of the heart of the Hebrew monarchy rose this vision of a democracy which should be both human and divine. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel. I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit."

When we ask next whether the condition of religion today shows any influence of democracy's second doctrine—that government must be by the people—we are confronted with a remarkable change from early times. Religion was then almost wholly the affair of a class. Those only administered religion, spoke for it, concerned themselves with it, who were certified by its agent, the Church; or if others attempted these functions, they were cast out as heretics or schismatics. But today it is those who claim an exclusive patent on religion who are themselves on trial. The spirit of democracy refuses to recognize any one ecclesiastical system as possessing exclusive right of way. On every side there have arisen bodies claiming orthodoxy, apostolicity, legitimacy; and the spirit of our age looks on indulgently and only smiles when one of them gets angry with the others and refuses to play. Instead of councils of clergy to settle church affairs, we have great conferences and movements by laymen. We hear lamentations that the authority of the clergy has declined. They are no longer looked to as the sources of light and knowledge, and their word when uttered is likely to be treated as of little weight. The moving forces of the religious world today are not only in the pulpit but also in the newspaper and the magazine.

This is a melancholy spectacle for those who regard the Church as the only agent of God in the world, and who tend to identify the Church with the clergy. Sometimes the endeavor is made to amend the situation by exalting the minister of religion as a priest. But the effort accomplishes little; not, as might be

claimed for it, because the ideal is high, but because in fact it is not high enough. For the type of priesthood thus set up is that of Aaron, where the priest belongs to a tribe apart from his fellows, and his functions consist in performing acts of ceremonial. Such, the Epistle to the Hebrews assures us, is too low an ideal of priesthood for the uplifting of the world. That which is needed is a priesthood of the order of Melchizedek, which is not based on genealogic descent, since it is without father, without mother; and whose functions are not primarily ritual but reside in kingship in righteousness and kingship in peace. Wherever today there is a minister of religion with a message, one who is a Melchizedek, an authority in righteousness, who can illustrate it and draw men to it; one who is king of Salem, a master of peace, who can lead men to the still waters of divine comfort,—there are hungry souls waiting for him. Priesthood such as this, after the order of Melchizedek, based upon character, our age welcomes with reverence and obedience; while for the assertion of prerogatives of official position it has less and less toleration. Is the minister of religion a priest because other men are not, or is he a priest just because others are? Is he different from them in kind, or is he what all others may be, not in occupation but in spirit? Has he official authority to forgive sins, and therefore to exact obedience; or is he in these respects representative of the priesthood of all believers? Questions such as these democracy has been calling on religion to answer. The presence of large numbers of intelligent and devout persons outside the churches shows that they reject the ecclesiastical answer, and, while still recognizing the sovereignty of religion, insist that its ministers do not constitute an aristocracy but are representative.

This same trend of thought has resulted in setting forth the object of religion as for the people. The necessity for machinery inevitably brought into existence ecclesiasticism. And ecclesiasticism did a service of great importance in building a fortress into which Christianity retreated, and where it remained in safety during the upheavals by which the ancient world passed into the modern. But the price paid by Christianity was high; for the Roman Empire and feudalism joined in stamping their

characteristic features upon the Church, and in getting both the Church and the world to acknowledge them as integral parts of the Christian religion. Ecclesiasticism, like a political party, has always tended to take itself too seriously, and to forget that its Master, the Son of Man, came not to be ministered unto but to minister. The effect of this serving of its own glory may be seen in that plainest instance in the modern world—the Ultramontane party in the Roman Catholic Church. The countries which a century ago, before democracy had found its tongue, were the most loyal to Rome, are today openly in revolt. And this, it may safely be said, is owing not so much to a rejection of the theology or the ritual of that Church as to the extreme ecclesiastical claims of Ultramontaniam. It is pathetic to see that Rome's only answer to her sons' complaint that they have been chastised with whips, is that she will chastise them with scorpions.

In opposition to this claim of dominance, the demand is being made everywhere on the churches today that they shall justify their existence by their service to the needs of the world. The insistence that religion shall be practical often, indeed, leaves out of sight the important requirement that the Church shall do the world's religious thinking for it in religion and furnish it with moral steam-power. But the demand for service of some kind as a test of legitimacy and a condition of toleration is but an appeal to the canon our Lord established in His significant word "Because." "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me," He said, "*because* he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, and to set at liberty them that are bruised." It is only through such service that any one approves himself a messenger of God.

One of the most remarkable events of the last half-century has been the sweep through the world of socialism. With us in America the social consciousness is developing a higher social conscience than the world has ever known. Even Russia, the home of absolutism, has glowed with the spirit of brotherhood and martyrdom; and, though she fights against it with prisons and exile and death, she knows that she must eventually yield to the intangible, on-surgng, conquering tide. We may not

approve some of the theories of socialism nor some of the forms it takes; but we shall misunderstand one of the mighty forces of our generation and the next if we miss the connection between this and that spirit of brotherhood which our Lord prescribed as His test of discipleship: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples—if ye have love one toward another." The vision of a state of society where, when one member suffers all the members suffer with it, or when one member is honored all the members rejoice with it,—this ideal has by no means worked itself free from the limitations of trades-unionism and class-feeling; but it has received through them a mighty impetus, which it is imperative for the Church to recognize and welcome with outstretched hand. It is the suspicion that the Church is too much occupied with preserving her own class-prerogatives, which has alienated from her many who are stirred by this gospel of brotherhood. Said the late Bishop Potter of New York in his Convention Address of 1901, "The great fault with our Church today is that it has become too largely interested in its own organization, instead of being interested in the betterment of mankind."

However the Church may turn from socialism as a political theory, she will do well to listen with welcome to the call to brotherhood which social organizations are uttering, and, with an awakened sense of kinship, to respond to it, with King Saul, "Is this thy voice, my son David?"

Perhaps the greatest service democracy has done for religion is in transferring the conception of God from that of an arbitrary monarch to that of a constitutional ruler. The fundamental idea of a monarch in the ancient world was based on unrelated will. It was desirable indeed that a king or emperor should rule in accordance with such public opinion as existed, in the interest of his subjects, with justice and uprightness. But if he did so, it was a matter of grace, not of obligation, for which he was to be regarded as an exception and highly praised. His right was, so it was believed, to consider solely his own will, unrelated to anything else. When therefore this monarchical conception was applied to God, as all political conceptions were, it expressed each feature in a superlative degree. His power was omnipotent; He was under no obligations; His will was unrelated to anything

but itself. Such a conception inevitably developed a deity who was an oriental despot magnified. The centuries even down to our own have been darkened by the fear or the contempt of this arbitrary and therefore cruel divinity. Probably all of us have felt or seen the shadow of this thick darkness—the dread of the saint lest he may wake up after death and find that he was not after all one of the elect; the scorn of the thinker when assured that there is no certainty that what is reasonable to him is reasonable to God; the apparent divine sanction given to the mere worship of will and power. Humanity wants to be able to bring its best to God and say, “All mine are Thine, and Thine are mine.” As the spirit of democracy has spread, it has insisted that government must be constitutional; that there must be certain principles which it must follow, certain things it shall not do; that the will of those in power shall be related to the eternal laws of righteousness and the interests of the governed. This constitution may be written or unwritten, narrow or ample; but in all countries of the world the contest is going on today between will unrelated and will related. And so the spirit of the age has been applying its test to God Himself, and asking the patriarch’s question, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” For even the Infinite Judge there is a code, and the standard to which the Divine will is brought to be judged is the Divine character. Because God can swear by no greater, He swears by Himself. We can no longer without a shock, which is deepest in the most devout, conceive of God as acting independently of right and wrong, or as making right and wrong by His mere fiat. We refuse to allow that He can damn an innocent soul, or that any act, wrong by the standard He has established for men, can be made out right because declared to have been done by Him. We hold Him, as it were, responsible before the bar of His own judgment. That moral sense which He has implanted in us must, we reverently claim, be the arbiter of His actions too. When the question arises, “Is God’s will founded upon His character, or His character upon His will?” the answer springs confidently to our lips, “The immutable will must rest upon the infinite righteousness.” Constitutional government has revealed to us the greater glory of will that is not arbitrary but is based upon and

responsible to something behind itself. The question, "Which is the more fundamental in God—His will or His character?" is of no trifling import. Does it make no difference whether I feel my path predestined by a mighty force, while I am powerless to turn or resist, or whether I believe it marked out by infinite wisdom and infinite love? whether the force which drives the world has behind it no rational and moral plan? From every one who has meditated with terror on the thought of an omnipotent Deity, not bound by the moral laws by which all men are bound, there will at once arise a cry, "It does make a difference! The centre of the Divine nature must be not in abstract will but in eternal righteousness."

For this thought of God, if again we may use the phrase with reverence, as a constitutional Ruler, we are largely indebted to the change throughout the world from absolute sovereignty to constitutional government.

I am inclined to think our age has gained from the doctrine of the divine immanence all that is at present possible for it, and can progress little further until it draws more upon the thought of the divine transcendence. Not that we shall return to painting the deity seated upon a throne in a distant heaven, issuing arbitrary decrees; but while recognizing the true voice of the soul as the voice of God, we must endue it with that majesty, that awe, that obedience-compelling strain, which were inspired by the clouds and darkness, the lightnings, the thunders, which surrounded the abode of Jahveh. It is only when we are filled with the conviction that the voice of the Lord is upon the waters and is full of majesty, that we are moved to give unto the Lord glory and strength, the glory due unto His name. Yet when the Divine voice is fully recognized within the soul, an imperative-ness will be found in it which no external fulminations can secure; or rather, the distinction between inward and outward revelation will have vanished, and the Kingdom of God will be real in the world because it is real in the hearts of men.

*HAS OLD TESTAMENT CRITICISM COLLAPSED?*¹

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The theory now for many years held by most critical students of the Old Testament is that the early narratives from Genesis to Kings are composite, and, further, that the sources from which they were compiled belong to different periods in Hebrew history, having been produced by authors, or schools of authors, occupying various points of view, but so related to one another that their contributions, when arranged in chronological order, reflect the course of events for many successive generations and the progressive development of ethical and religious culture among the Chosen People.

With reference to the dates of the supposed documents, especially those underlying the Hexateuch, there has always been difference of opinion among those who have adopted this general scheme. The great majority of the critics have more or less closely followed Wellhausen, whose original statement is to the effect that the Yahwistic and Elohist elements were mostly the product of the golden period of Hebrew literature, preceding the destructive invasions of Palestine by the Assyrians, the Elohist being somewhat the later of the two; that both of them had a history before they were united; that Deuteronomy appeared just before the Restoration under Josiah, and, after circulating in two editions until some time after the fall of the Jewish monarchy, finally took a form combining the peculiarities of both and was added to the preceding compilation; and that the Priestly document, which was the product of a school of writers during and after the Exile, was completed and added to the other three before 444 B.C., when the first five parts of the resulting Hexateuch were promulgated as the law of God by Ezra.

Dillmann's theory of the age of the sources differed somewhat less widely from that of the critics of the preceding gen-

¹ A lecture delivered at the Harvard Summer School of Theology, July 6, 1910.

eration. He held that the Elohistie was the earliest of the four documents, and that much of the Priestly was not materially later, while the Yahwistic belonged to the middle of the eighth century; also that these three were first wrought by themselves into a composite work, to which Deuteronomy, written in the reign of Josiah, together with considerable legal matter were added during the Exile.

These are the two general forms which the "documentary hypothesis" took in the last decades of the nineteenth century. In one or the other it was generally accepted among the Biblical scholars of the Continent, and later, in spite of strenuous opposition, became prevalent in Great Britain and America. More than once there has been a report that its days were numbered; that an opposing champion, or unwitting instrument, of tradition had dealt it a mortal blow, or that its defenders were destroying it and one another. There is such a report now in circulation, and there are those who for various reasons, conscious or unconscious, "partly believe it." Is it well founded? Is this hypothesis, after all, only an eddy in which the Biblical scholars of the last thirty years, one after another, have almost without exception been caught, and from which they must escape to reach the current of real progress in knowledge of the Old Testament?

The question must evidently be divided, and it will be most convenient to inquire first of all whether Biblical scholars are abandoning the documentary hypothesis. Note the terms used. The point is not whether scholars in other fields of learning have changed their minds with reference to the validity of a Biblical theory, nor whether Biblical scholars have changed their minds with reference to views held by certain adherents of the documentary hypothesis, but whether authorities on Biblical literature are deserting the position that the Hexateuch is a composite production compiled from other works by at least four authors of as many different periods. To the question thus defined, the answer, allowing of course for sporadic exceptions under peculiar circumstances, must be a decided negative. In fact, the critics, so far from abandoning this theory, are now taking it for granted and devoting themselves to the task of perfecting its application, and that along two lines. In the first place, although they are

at one on the principle that the Hexateuch is composite, and, in the main, on the proper analysis of its contents, there are details on which they have not yet been able to agree. These they are now making the subject of research and discussion, revising past findings as it becomes necessary, and drawing more and more satisfactorily the lines separating the recognized sources. It sometimes makes much difference whether a single verse or sentence is referred to one source or another. Thus, if in Exodus, chap. 2, as Meyer claims, vs. 15 is from the Yahwist and is the continuation of vs. 10a, the reason why Pharaoh sought to put Moses to death would be, not, as one would naturally infer from the text as it stands, that he had slain an Egyptian, but that the princess, his foster-mother, had brought him into the royal family.

The analysis of the Hexateuch, however, is not complete when the critic has identified the parts, long or short, that originally belonged to the main documents. The theory, as has been intimated, is that each of these sources had a history of its own before it became a part of the present compilation; that during its separate circulation it was more or less changed and enlarged; and that, when it was finally united with one or more of the others, it was again subjected to revision to adapt it, or parts of it, to its new relations. Moreover, some additions were naturally made after the compilation had been effected. Now, it is the business of the critics to dissect, if possible, the work of the reviser and the compiler from that of the author, and thus carry the history of each of the documents back to its origin; and, although they doubtless sometimes go too far, there never was a time when they were more satisfactorily accomplishing this task. It is not necessary to go far to find examples of the result of such work. There is one in Gen. 2 10-15, where there has been inserted the description of a river that had no place in the original author's conception of Eden, and another in the next chapter, where the tree of life is just as clearly foreign to the story of the first disobedience. The skill with which such interpolations are sometimes adapted to the context is seen in Gen. 2 15, which repeats a part of vs. 1, and in Gen. 16 9 f., where the compiler who united the Yahwistic and Elohist writings made Yahweh instruct Hagar

to return to her mistress, and thus prepared the way for a second version of the story of her quarrel with Sarah, now found in Gen. 21 8 ff. The last passage, on the other hand, furnishes an illustration of another sort. In vs. 14, as translated in the English Version, Abraham "took bread and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the boy." The meaning is tolerably clear, but the sentence, which literally reproduces the Hebrew, is certainly awkward. The key to the matter is found in the Greek Version, which says that the patriarch "took bread and a skin of water, and gave them to Hagar; and he placed upon her shoulder the boy," that she might carry him as Syrian mothers still carry their babies. It is clear that this was the original reading in Hebrew, and that the compiler who added the Priestly writing to the previous compilation let it stand, but that a later reader, finding that, according to the Priestly chronology, Ishmael must have been about seventeen years of age when Hagar left home, transposed some of the words and thus suppressed an unintentional absurdity.

When the analysis is complete, and the contents of the Hexateuch have been distributed to the various authors, revisers, and compilers, it remains to fix, if possible, the dates of all these contributors. This is a complicated and difficult problem, requiring not only a thorough knowledge of the Old Testament, but a familiar acquaintance with the history of the Orient and a well-balanced judgment. The fact that there are still two schools of critics shows that it has not yet been satisfactorily solved; but both schools are at work on it, and, to prove that they are making progress without abandoning the documentary hypothesis, I will cite the opinions of representatives of each school.

Let the representatives of the school of Dillmann be Kittel, Baudissin, and König. The first differs somewhat from his chief. He maintains that the Elohist document originated near the beginning, and the Yahwistic toward the end, of the ninth century B.C.; that the original of Deuteronomy was written in the reign of Manasseh; and that the three were united with one another during or just before the Exile. Meanwhile the Priestly document, the oldest parts of which may date from the reign of Solomon, reached its final proportions, was carried by the Jews to

Babylonia, and was there added to the previous compilation. The resultant work, without the book of Joshua, was the Law promulgated in 444 B.C. by Ezra.

Baudissin puts the Yahwist about the beginning of the eighth century B.C., the Elohist a little earlier. About the same time the priests began to put into writing their ceremonial regulations, but the Priestly document in its original form was not produced much before Josiah's reformation, which is also the date of the original Deuteronomy. The first two were united before Deuteronomy was written. This last, enlarged soon after the beginning of the Exile, and the Priestly document, completed about the end of the same period, were incorporated with the previous compilation a little later by a Deuteronomic editor. The result was a Pentateuch, not a Hexateuch, which was recognized as the law of God in 445 B.C.

König thinks that the Elohist lived as early as the time of the Judges, and that the Yahwist should be placed in the reign of David. Deuteronomy originated soon after 722 B.C., the date of the fall of Samaria. The completion of the Priestly document, however, he brings down into the sixth century before our era. These various writings were finally wrought into the Pentateuch, or, perhaps, the Priestly document was added by Ezra in Babylonia to a compilation previously made from the other three.

A comparison of these three schemes will bring out the significant fact, that, while they all follow Dillmann in placing the Elohist before the Yahwist, they incline to place Deuteronomy considerably earlier than 621 B.C., but to bring the Priestly document nearer to the date proposed by Wellhausen.

Let us now consult a few representatives of Wellhausen's school, and first Cornill. In the sixth edition of his *Einleitung* (1908) he dates the various sources as follows: the Yahwistic in its original form in the reign of Jehoshaphat, or about 850 B.C.; the Elohist in the reign of Jeroboam II, about a century later; Deuteronomy a little before 621 B.C.; and the Priestly document about 500 B.C. The first two, after being revised and enlarged, were united about 650 B.C.; the third, after having gone through two editions, was added during the Exile; and the fourth, which Cornill identifies with the Law promulgated by Ezra, between 444 and 400 B.C.

The dates given by Cornill are very widely accepted, and have the support of many eminent scholars. I will mention only Holzinger in Germany and Carpenter in England, who, as the result of special and thorough researches on the subject, have adopted them all. But it will be well to add the testimony of three other scholars who differ more or less from Cornill.

The first is Gunkel, the introduction to whose commentary on Genesis has been translated into English. He attributes to schools of story-tellers the substance of the two works on which the first compilation was based. The Yahwistic collection, he thinks, had its origin in the ninth century B.C., the Elohist in the first half of the eighth; they were wrought into one work toward the end of the Jewish monarchy. The Priestly document—he has no occasion to discuss the age of Deuteronomy—was completed in the first half of the fifth century B.C., and was not added to the previous compilation until after its publication by Ezra in 444 B.C.

The opinion of Baentsch is important because he has recently been quoted as against the theory of Wellhausen. His views are found in his commentary on the Middle Books of the Pentateuch, which he has analyzed as thoroughly as any one who has ever made them an object of study. He does not assign exact dates to the sources from which these books were compiled, but he holds that the Yahwistic document originated not long before 800 B.C., the Elohist somewhat later, and Deuteronomy in the seventh century B.C. In the Priestly document he sees a work, very little of which is earlier than Ezekiel, substantially complete in 444 B.C., when it was made public by Ezra.

Finally, let me cite Steuernagel, because he has made a special study of Deuteronomy. His conclusion with reference to the sources of the Pentateuch is as follows: The original Yahwist dates from the beginning of the ninth century B.C., the Elohist from the first half of the eighth. The original of Deuteronomy, parts of which may have been written as early as 720 B.C., was composed about 650 B.C. and made public in 623 (621). The Priestly document, a product of the literary activity of the Exile, dates from perhaps 500 B.C. The first two were united between 700 and 623 (621) B.C. Deuteronomy in an enlarged form was

added about 550 B.C., and the Priestly document between 445 and 330 B.C.

It has frequently been made a subject of reproach and ridicule that the Biblical critics do not agree among themselves. Those who thus treat them forget that men who value the truth above all else do not take kindly to compromises. This being the case, it is significant that these five representatives of the school of Wellhausen differ so little from one another and from the original position of their leader. They all refer the Yahwist to the ninth century B.C., the Elohist to the eighth, and Deuteronomy to the seventh century; and none of them dates the Priestly source before the Exile. The one who varies most from the average opinion is Steuernagel, whose elaborate theory on the origin of Deuteronomy requires that the collection of laws which formed the nucleus of the book be placed as early as 690 B.C. It should also be noted that all those who express an opinion on the subject agree with Kuenen that it was the Priestly document, and not, as Wellhausen still holds, the completed Pentateuch, to which the Jews pledged obedience in 444 (445) B.C. There are, however, no signs of a disposition to abandon the documentary hypothesis.

This is the situation in the critical camp; but, say some, these scholars are living in a fool's paradise, taking no thought of the danger threatening from more than one direction. Personally, I do not believe that there is cause for apprehension. We cannot pass in review all the attempts to disprove the prevalent theory, but it is worth while to notice the book entitled *The Problem of the Old Testament*, published in 1906 by Professor James Orr of Glasgow. The author is a theologian with an enviable reputation, who has read widely, and apparently feels at home in his subject. His book, of which the jaunty motto is, *Nubecula est, quae cito evanesceat*, puts the case against the critics as well, perhaps, as any work that could be mentioned. It has doubtless encouraged for the time being popular opposition to their contention; but is it convincing?

Professor Orr begins with a statement of the problem. He insists that it is twofold, and that the first question is how we are to conceive of the religion of the Old Testament "as respects its nature and origin" (p. 4), because, although, as he admits,

the rule is not without exceptions, "the decisions arrived at on purely literary questions . . . are largely controlled by the view taken of the origin and course of development of the religion, and, with a different theory on these subjects, the judgments passed on the age, relations, and historical value of particular writings would be different" (p. 5). In the end he requires that the student have, not only a conception of the Hebrew religion, but one that involves a supernatural revelation, and he warns his readers that "it cannot be too constantly borne in mind that it is not any and every kind of admission of the supernatural which satisfies the Christian demand" (p. 22). In other words, in spite of his assertion that "the age, authorship, and simple or composite character of a book are matters for investigation" (p. 16), he really substitutes for the bias of which he repeatedly accuses the critics a prejudice in favor of an opposite opinion. He goes so far as to claim the support of Wellhausen in this position, although any one who will take the trouble to read in their connection the words quoted,—*"it is only within the region of religious antiquities and dominant religious ideas . . . that the controversy can be brought to a definite issue,"*—will find that they refer, not to the standpoint of the critic, but to data by which, as well as by the linguistic and historical contents, he must be guided in his analysis. He will find, also, that they immediately follow an arraignment of the writer's predecessors for being blinded by their prejudices, and therefore acting like firemen who make a great show of zeal but take care not to go near the conflagration.

In his second chapter, Professor Orr, not content with the preparation already made for the study of the Old Testament, thinks it desirable to "look for a little at the book itself, in the form in which we have it, and allow its own voice to be heard on its own character and place in the economy of revelation." Then he proceeds in advance of proof to claim for it "in the form," be it noted, "in which we have it," a "remarkable" unity and a progressive development in its history and religion toward completion in the person and work of Jesus of Nazareth. Now, while most Biblical scholars would probably agree that a unity of purpose shows itself in the actual history of the Chosen People, and

progress toward the revelation of God in and by Christ, it is rather too much to ask them to allow any one to take for granted one of the most essential points in dispute. The modern critic says, and undertakes to prove, that the Pentateuch is not, in the proper sense of the word, a unit, that is, homogeneous; and, as for progress in doctrine, the first chapter of Genesis implies an idea of God more advanced than is found in Deuteronomy.

The body of Professor Orr's work consists of eight chapters. The first is an argument from critical premises to show the antiquity and credibility of the Pentateuchal history. The next three are devoted to criticism of critical theories relating to this history and to the religion and institutions of the Hebrews. In the remaining four are discussed, in order, the Jehovistic analysis, the question of Deuteronomy, the Priestly code, and the Priestly document as a whole. His treatment of these various topics constantly betrays the influence of the doctrine of revelation assumed in the beginning; its tone throughout is apologetic rather than scientific; and it does scant justice to the evidence on which the documentary theory is founded. The close of the last chapter shows what is the outcome of his argument.

"To what conclusion," he asks, "have we now been led?" and he replies, "Not to the conclusion that Moses himself wrote the Pentateuch in the precise shape or extent in which we now possess it; for the work, we think, shows very evident signs of various pens and styles, of editorial redaction, of stages of compilation. . . . On the other hand, very strongly to the view of the unity, essential *Mosaicity*, and relative antiquity of the Pentateuch. . . . In the collation and preparation of the materials for this work—some of them, perhaps, reaching back into pre-Mosaic times—and the laying of the foundations of the existing narrative, to which Moses by his own compositions, according to the consistent tradition, lent the initial impulse, many hands and minds may have co-operated, and may have continued to co-operate after the master mind was removed; but unity of purpose and will gave a corresponding unity to the product of their labors. . . . We have found no good reason for separating the *J* and *E* of the critics, and regarding them as independent documents; and as little for placing their origin as late as the ninth or eighth century. . . . We have been led on historical and critical grounds to reject the theory of the Josianic origin of *Deuteronomy* and, in accordance with the claims of the book itself, to affirm the genuineness of the Deuteronomic discourses, substan-

tially in the form in which we have them. . . . We have found that there are the strongest critical reasons for denying that the *P writing* (the peculiarities of which are acknowledged) ever subsisted as an independent document. . . . Further, from the close relation subsisting between P and JE in the narratives, we are compelled to assign both, as elements of a composite work, to practically the same age. . . . We have used the term 'collaboration' and 'co-operation' to *express the kind and manner of the activity* which, in our view, brought the Pentateuchal books into their present shape, less, however, as suggesting the definite theory of origin than as indicating the labor of original composers, working with a common end, in contrast with the idea of late irresponsible redactions, combining, altering, manipulating, enlarging at pleasure. . . . Beyond this we do not find it possible to go with any degree of confidence. It may well be—though everything here is more or less conjectural—that, as already hinted, the original JEP history and Code embraced, not simply the Book of the Covenant, but a brief summary of the Levitical ordinances, analogous, as Dillmann thinks, to the so-called Law of Holiness; possibly, also, as Delitzsch supposes, a short narrative, in its proper place, of the decisions of Moses and of his death. We have seen that Deuteronomy, in its original form, was probably an independent work; the priestly laws, also, would be at first chiefly in the hands of the priests. Later, but still, in our opinion early,—possibly in the times immediately succeeding the conquest, but not later than the days of the undivided kingdom,—the original work would be enlarged by union with Deuteronomy and the incorporation of the larger mass of Levitical material. In some such way, with possible revision by Ezra, or whoever else gave the work its final, canonical shape, our Pentateuch may have arisen."

This is Professor Orr's solution of the problem of the Old Testament as it relates to the Pentateuch. The first thing that strikes one on reading it is that it is by no means the traditional view, but a new theory, or rather a combination of features from various theories that have been, or are, entertained by others. Then, one after another, its weaknesses emerge.

In the first place, this theory, with its various pens and styles, its authors, redactors, and compilers, is as complicated as the one that its author ridicules, and much less intelligible.

Secondly, it is unsatisfactory in that the author, having assumed the unity of the Pentateuch, and proved to his own satisfaction that the Yahwist and the Elohist are one, and that the Priestly writer belongs to the same age, has no sufficient basis for so elaborate a scheme.

Thirdly, it is asserted that Moses by his own compositions "lent the impulse" to the production of the Pentateuch, but the only parts of it attributed, or, if they represent him, attributable to him, are the discourses in Deuteronomy, delivered just before his death in Moab.

Fourthly, the view that the Yahwistic and the Deuteronomic documents, and the Priestly so far as to include the Law of Holiness, belong to the same age, is open to the same objection made against the traditional belief on the subject, namely, that the origin of the three, not merely distinct, but at many points conflicting, codes found in these sources within the Mosaic period is incredible.

Fifthly, the reasons for distinguishing between a Yahwist and an Elohist are as good of their kind as those for recognizing a Priestly writer distinct from either or both of them. It is therefore inconsistent to admit the latter, and refuse to admit the former distinction.

Finally, the denial, with Klostermann, of the independence of the Priestly writer or writers, is an attempt to revive the "supplementary hypothesis," which was widely accepted in the first half of the last century, but was long ago abandoned by Biblical scholars generally because it did not do justice to the persistent internal discrepancy between passages of any given literary type and those belonging to any other.

I need not go into further details. Professor Orr's theory will not satisfy conservative students of the Old Testament when they come to understand it. I am sure that it will not convert any of the critics. It will probably, after having served for a season as a sort of half-way house for careful or timid people, go the way of all makeshifts and compromises—and be forgotten.

The Problem of the Old Testament, and other works of the same character, are not the only agency on which those who reject the current theory of the origin of the Pentateuch rest their hope that it will speedily be overthrown. They think they have found powerful allies in the archaeologists, some of whom have gone out of their way to encourage this opinion. Not long ago there appeared in a theological review the statement that "these new revelations from the mounds of the old Orient prove conclusively

that what Wellhausen and his school have regarded as basal facts were after all nothing more than plausible but unfounded hypotheses, the fond fancies of dreamers" (*Methodist Review*, 1908, pp. 645 ff.). In a later issue of the same publication Professor Orr is quoted as saying that "in Old Testament scholarship itself, under the influence of the new so-called historical-critical movement, there is taking place a profound change of opinion, which threatens very soon to make the Wellhausen school, alike in its historical construction and in many of its critical results, as obsolete as the school of Baur is in New Testament criticism" (1909, pp. 646 ff.).

These statements are evidently made in good faith. If they are well founded, although the documentary hypothesis has thus far withstood the direct attacks of conservative scholars, the outlook for it is gloomy.

The first thing that strikes one on reading such an announcement is the strangeness of an appeal to the orientalist, who, however much they may reverence the Scriptures, do not accept the traditional interpretation of it, and therefore must sometimes prove unwelcome allies. There is, perhaps, no Assyriologist who is more frequently quoted in America by conservative students of the Old Testament than Professor Hommel. He is reckoned among the defenders of the faith because he maintains that Abraham and Chedorlaomer were contemporaries, and that the fourteenth chapter of Genesis is veritable history. But those who thus regard him overlook the fact that, in so doing, he throws out of joint the entire system of chronology interwoven with the historical books from Genesis to Kings; also that, although, if the invasion of Palestine by the king of Elam occurred between 1772 and 1742 B.C., then according to the Biblical figures the world must have been created about 3775 B.C., he yet has no hesitation in saying in Hastings's *Dictionary* (I, p. 223a) that we have records of a civilization in Babylonia as far back as 5000 B.C. Now, it is evident that, whether Hommel is right or wrong with reference to the date of Chedorlaomer, or the antiquity of Babylonian civilization, it is hardly safe for conservatives to quote him as one of their authorities, or for him to allow himself to be so regarded.

The point I have just made has its value, but it does not go

to the root of the matter. The real weakness of the appeal to archaeology is in the fact that its testimony has no bearing on the question at issue. Cornill, in the preface to the last edition of his *Einleitung*, referring to what he calls "the panbabylonian deluge," says: "It does not touch the problem of literary criticism. If there were discovered today, on a tablet of Ur-ghanna of Sirgulla, dated 4500 B.C., a legal document corresponding to the Priests' Code, the Priests' Code as a product of Israelite literature would nevertheless remain a Babylonian writing of 500 B.C.; and if the excavations in Palestine brought to light an authentic monument commemorating a victory by Hammurabi, Genesis 14 would not cease to be a very late midrash partly based on ancient material." This is not a vain boast, as any one can see who will consider just what Biblical criticism means and what the critical hypothesis claims to have determined. The critics, finding in the Pentateuch as it has been transmitted reasons for believing it a composite production, proceed by means of divergencies in style and content to analyze it and restore, as far as possible, the sources from which they suspect that it was compiled. If they find these supposed documents not strictly homogeneous, they note the elements of which they seem to be composed and their relation to one another. Finally, they compare with one another, the documents, or parts of documents discovered, determine, if possible, by means of indications of various kinds, their relative dates, and arrange them in chronological order. Now it is plain that, when the critics decide that a document is of a certain date, they do not mean that every part of it without exception originated at that time, or that the parts that betray lateness may not have had earlier, even much earlier, forms, but only that the document or passage, in its present form or setting, belongs to a certain period. If, therefore, as Cornill says, it could be proved that Chedorlaomer actually invaded Palestine, with Hammurabi in his train, the establishment of this fact would not invalidate evidence of lateness in the Biblical account of the expedition.

The point I have been trying to illustrate, that the documentary hypothesis has to do with the process by which the Pentateuch became what it is rather than with the substance of its contents, explains some things about which there has been no little confu-

sion. In the first place, it explains how it is that, as Professor Orr says, "among the foremost" critical scholars "there are many whom no one who understands their work would dream of classing as other than believing, and defenders of revealed religion" (p. 8). It explains, also, some alleged defections from the ranks of the higher critics. Thus the author of one of the articles on recent phases of German theology quotes Baentsch as saying in a previous publication: "They [the views of Wellhausen] capture one theological chair after another. In spite of the disfavor with which conservatives in State and Church regarded them, they nevertheless have forced men of mature judgment and unquestionable piety to accept and defend them." Then he adds: "The above from Professor Baentsch's pen no doubt reflected the opinion of most Old Testament scholars in Germany for the past quarter of a century. Now, however, we see signs on every hand that there is a change going on. Wellhausenism, though strongly intrenched, is being gradually assailed, and that from different standpoints. Strange to say, one of its most resolute assailants is Baentsch. He has gone so far as to write a very interesting brochure entitled 'The Monotheism of the Ancient Orient and of Israel,' with the avowed purpose of reconstructing or superseding the teaching of Wellhausen and his adherents." Now, although in the extract the documentary hypothesis is not mentioned, I think one is justified in supposing that the author had it in mind as a part of the teaching of Wellhausen, and that the average reader would so understand him. If so, the language used misrepresents Baentsch and his position. He has not, like Professor Eerdmans of Leyden, rejected the critical hypothesis, or thought of so doing. In 1903, when he published his commentary on the book of Numbers, he said: "The examples [of repetition and divergence] cited, which might be multiplied, sufficiently show that the books from Exodus to Numbers present, not a homogeneous narrative, but a composite of different elements. The separate elements are not disconnected fragments, but they dispose themselves according to language and style and internal relations in three distinct, characteristic narratives, in which can easily be discerned the peculiarities of the three sources, namely, the Yahwist (J), the Elohist (E), and the Priest Code,

or so-called Original Document (P), first distinguished in Genesis" (*Einleitung*, p. viii). In another place he declares that "we have in the Pentateuch the product of a literary process beginning with the close of the ninth century and continuing into the second century B.C." (p. lxvi). This was his position in 1903, and, strange as it may appear, there is nothing in his more recent book to show that he has abandoned it. In fact, he declares in that work that the determination of the structure and origin of these books must be left to Biblical criticism (p. 99); also that the reports concerning the work of Moses "come from a time so much later that we may not unhesitatingly use them as records" (p. 83); and finally, that it must not be forgotten that Wellhausen, Stade, and others have brought to light knowledge concerning the prophets and the historical position of the Law that has lasting value and entitles them to enduring fame (p. 108). This is Baentsch's position in the book in question with regard to the documentary hypothesis. How then can he be reckoned among the assailants of Wellhausenism? The explanation is simple. When the documentary hypothesis was launched in its prevalent form, some of its adherents coupled with it views on historical or theological subjects which the acceptance of it did not require or imply. There were those, for example, who not only questioned the historicity of the patriarchs and Moses, but, with Kuenen, denied the uniqueness of the Hebrew religion. From the first there have been many, especially in Great Britain and America, who refused to adopt these radical opinions. There have also always been more conservative scholars on the Continent. One of the latter is Cornill, who says of himself in the preface already quoted: "In the summer of 1879, when, as a newly inducted instructor at Marburg, I lectured for the first time on the earliest history of Israel, at a time when such a view was not the fashion, but, for a young beginner, positively perilous,—since he could thereby only bring upon himself the reproach of being most lamentably behind the times,—I declared, and thoroughly proved my contention, that Abraham was a strictly historical character and religious hero, and the covenant and legislation through Moses at Sinai an indisputable fact; and I have always maintained this position." Now Baentsch thinks that the critics do not give

the Hebrews, or the neighboring peoples, due credit for the progress they had made, even in early times, on the way toward monotheism,—another question, observe, distinct from that of the origin of the Pentateuch,—and his book is his protest in the matter. It is by no means hostile to the documentary theory, of which, as I have shown, he is one of the most prominent exponents.

The survey here undertaken would not be complete without a word about what is called “panbabylonianism.” This had its origin in an intellectual tendency corresponding to the optical illusion that causes one to see things on which one’s eyes have for some time been intently fixed in places where they are not objectively present. The general doctrine of panbabylonianism has various phases. The one in which we are at present interested is that which has been given to it by Winckler and Jeremias, and which might be more exactly denominated panbabylonian astralism, the gist of it being that the popular Babylonian religion made the starry sky a revelation of the will of the gods, and that this system of astral mythology was disseminated among other peoples, and is reflected more or less clearly in the conception of the world and religion embodied in the Old Testament. I shall not go into a further description of the theory or attempt a detailed estimate of its value. Such a description and criticism by Professor Toy appeared in this *Review* for January of the current year. I will, however, in a few words indicate why it should not disturb us.

In the first place, it has no bearing on Wellhausen’s theory, properly so called, since it has to do, not with the literary form, but with the religious content, of the Hebrew Scriptures. It is therefore not surprising that Winckler and Jeremias, who are its best-known exponents, and its adherents generally, take for granted the composite character of the Pentateuch.

Secondly, strange as it may seem, this theory is not hostile to a generous estimate of the historical and religious value of the Old Testament. Thus Baentsch, who has adopted it, finds in it support for his protest against the representation of the Mosaic age as a barbarous one, and the Hebrew religion of the time as largely a combination of fetishism, totemism, animism, and other like

superstitions. Jeremias, in the preface to the last edition of his book, *Das Alte Testament im Lichte des alten Orients*, is even more explicitly conservative. He says: "I agree with those who seek in the Old Testament a realm of historically developed revelation. The Israelite representation of God and redemption is not a distillation of human ideas produced in various regions of the Orient, but everlasting truth in the brilliant dress of oriental modes of thought." This avowal ought to convince any one that, whether panbabylonianism is a reality or only a figment of the orientalist imagination, it is not a serious menace to a rational faith in the divine origin of the Hebrew religion.

A few words, to close, on the outlook. First, it can hardly be doubted that the documentary hypothesis, in substantially the prevalent outlines, has come to stay: that is to say, we shall have to accept the theory that the early narratives of the Old Testament are composite productions, compiled from various sources in which had previously been embodied the unfolding conceptions of the Hebrews concerning their past. If I were asked to go more into detail, I should say that this theory will finally be modified to this extent, namely, that the critics will have to agree to refer the original of Deuteronomy to a date nearer 700 than 621 B.C., and more clearly to recognize the existence in all the documents of material derived from oral or written sources, older, and in some cases much older, than the documents themselves. These concessions made, the result will be just what it was in the case of the theory of evolution. At first we rejected and anathematized it, because some who held it ignored God, and we saw no way to reconcile it with faith in his sovereignty; but, when we realized that no law can execute itself, we accepted the new doctrine, and soon found it even more worthy of "his eternal power and godhead" than our previous ideas concerning the origin of the world. So also we shall finally adjust ourselves to the idea of evolution as applied to the Pentateuch and the Hebrew Scriptures generally, and find in it one of our strongest arguments for the divinity of their origin.

Meanwhile the archaeologists will not have been idle. They will not have made good the sweeping boast that Hebrew religious thought was dominated by astral myths, because it will be easy,

when some one thoroughly at home in the Old Testament undertakes it, to show that the indications on which the panbabylonians base their contention are really only relics of popular beliefs which the Biblical writers, so far from accepting, were engaged in eliminating. These enthusiastic scholars, however, will have thrown so much light upon the ancient Orient that it will then be much easier than now to test the correctness of the earliest Hebrew narratives, and, I think, also, much easier to believe in the historicity of at least the more significant Hebrew worthies.

I will close with a quotation from the Dutch critic, Wildeboer. "We must go forward," he says, "in the new way; and with firm confidence. We will not allow ourselves to be disturbed in our work, either by presumptuous Assyriologists or by those who, in the name of religion and Christendom, think they must call us from our path. . . . We are confident that the same Power who has brought us face to face with these problems will lead us forth from the struggle to higher ground and a deeper conviction. He who trusts the truth has God at his side."

*SOME ASPECTS OF NEW TESTAMENT MIRACLES*¹

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Christianity is a religion of the spirit,—a religion of faith, as the Apostle Paul would have said. That is, its essential nature resides in unseen and spiritual attributes; on the persistence of spiritual forces depends its identity from age to age; the inner attitude of the soul is the sphere of its true life. Neither letter nor form, but spirit, is the characteristic mark of Christianity. If this is true, it follows that the life of Christianity necessarily implies the continually new expression of the Christian spirit amid the ever-changing phases of human thought and life. And historical conditions will govern not only the outward forms and modes of Christian life, but also, at least in its concrete formulation, the thought of Christians about religion. The changes that have taken place in Christian thought and doctrine may well be no indication of any weakness or imperfection in Christianity. They are, in fact, rather the manifestation of its excellence, the proof that it is indeed the supreme religion, capable of bringing in the kingdom of God.

Some have tried, by a process of successive eliminations, to discard the Jewish, the Greek, the pagan, the Teutonic influences which from time to time have affected Christianity, as if by such expurgations they could isolate essential Christianity from its accidents, and separate the kernel from the husk. But if Christianity is a religion of the spirit expressing itself under historical conditions, its expression in any period of history will be made through the ideas, true and false, through the modes of life, crude or refined, through the existing beliefs, philosophies, laws, customs, and even superstitions of the time. Many philosophies which we deem false, many rites which we find degrading, have been the well-justified means of expressing the religion of the

¹A lecture given in the Lowell Institute course at King's Chapel, Boston, November 29, 1909.

spirit for men who held those philosophies and to whom those rites were dear. Those things are to be called foreign influences upon a pure Christianity only in the same sense in which that would be true of the inadequate science, clumsy philosophy, and sorry philistinism of custom which in our own day do duty, as the best we have, for civilization.

If it be asked, wherein, then, lies the assurance that our Christianity is properly called Christian, what force binds together these shifting phases of life and thought, and entitles us to speak of them as belonging to one religion, a personal conviction is the only answer that can be given,—namely, that the identity of the Christian religion through the ages depends on the New Testament, and in particular on the presentation of Jesus Christ found in the gospels and on the persistent spiritual power of his person.

From the general point of view thus outlined the question of the miracles of the New Testament, like every other historical topic connected with the Christian religion, must be considered.

I

The fundamental requisite for modern educated Christians with regard to the accounts of miracles in the New Testament is integrity of thought. It is far less important that one's knowledge should be scientifically exact, or his principles in accord with those prevalent at the present day, than it is that all one's thinking should be in substantial agreement with the real, underlying principles by which he lives. Every one has such principles,—precisely the deepest and most constantly influential of them are often not explicitly formulated in consciousness. They are the profound massive convictions which control motives and judgments, form a man's real character, and in the long run determine his actions. They are the prejudices, if that name is insisted on, which no reasoning, however plausible or cogent, ever fully overcomes, which rise up to disconcert us when we violate them, which now give us solid peace, or again stir recurrent and unappeasable doubts. To shake these deep principles may be necessary, but it is always dangerous. But the man of power and freedom is the

man whose fundamental convictions are sound, and who stands sturdy in the full consistency of his mind.

If a man's fundamental principles leave him in the happy exercise of belief in the miracles of the New Testament, as has been true of many of the best who have ever lived, there is for him no problem in the matter, and no great occasion for clarifying his thought. To the man, however, who feels a constant uneasy prick of tormenting doubt, as is the case with great numbers of educated Christians at the present day, there are several things to be said.

First, he must not shut his eyes to such doubt, and deliberately drown it in an insincere forgetfulness. Peace is too dearly bought at the price of such a moral and intellectual narcotic. A subtle weakening of mind and conscience is the natural result of this, as of other opiates.

Secondly, he must not force his own judgment by special pleading. A man has a full right to say that he does not know; he has no right—though too many good people have done so—to crowd down intellectual doubts by the exercise of will-power. There is a place for the exercise of the will against doubt, but it is where doubt touches a moral choice, not an intellectual judgment. We will refuse to doubt the moral imperative, or the goodness of God, but we are bound to doubt when it is a case of mere weight of evidence, and the balance inclines to the negative side.

Thirdly, the grave religious aspects of the situation are to be frankly admitted. Confidence in the general trustworthiness of the gospels as historical records is undoubtedly important for Christian faith. It may not be easy to say just how much in the way of historical conclusions is requisite in order to provide the necessary basis for the faith of intelligent and reasonable Christians; but for most of us it clearly is important to be convinced that Jesus Christ lived, and that a trustworthy notion can be reached of his character and teaching, his conception of God, his idea of man's relation to God, his utterances about God's requirements of man. To be deprived of this confidence and driven to the belief that the gospels are mere fairy-tales, or even that we can have no knowledge at all about these matters, would for most of us not only destroy the possibility of any clear understanding

of Christian history, but would be likely to require such a reconstruction of our general religious thinking as greatly to impair the vitality and integrity of our religious life. But if all the gospel narratives of miracles—or even many of them—are held to be legendary, can we believe in the rest of the gospels? If we disbelieve the stories of miracles, do the report of the Sermon on the Mount and the incident of the rich young man rest on any better evidence than they? This question is a serious one. Doubtless, precisely this result has sometimes come about, and the fear of it is probably the strongest motive and chief concern with those who at the present day resolutely defend every part of the gospels as proved history.

II

The conception of God, and of God's relation to the world, on which the New Testament ideas about miracles rest is not difficult to see. God is the source of all activity. He created the world at the beginning; he maintains it; from him proceeds the orderly working of the heavenly bodies and the seasons; he gives life and sustains existence. To him the ravens cry for food, from him men receive what the bountiful earth provides. And in all this—in the support and administration of the created world—God is immediately present and active.

If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them, then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. . . . And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land. . . .

But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments, . . . I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, . . . and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies; they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.

It is often hard to know just where the line between literal belief and the poetical representation of dependence on God is to be drawn; and the lofty language of the Psalms about God who

sendeth the springs into the valleys, and watereth the earth with rain, and maketh darkness and it is night, can be used by modern as well as ancient worshippers of the living God. Nevertheless it is clear that to the pious Israelite the hand of God was immediately present in Nature much as a man's is present in his own works,—that God's activity was likened to that of a man, and was thought of as directly subject to a will acting like a man's, and capable of varying its decisions to suit the immediate needs of God's dependent creatures. Indeed, it can hardly be said that the Bible thinks of Nature in our sense at all,—as a mechanism of material existence set over against God and organized by laws. This place is taken by the conception—far simpler and more closely analogous to human relations—of Creation, the handiwork of God, which he has fashioned, and which his instant purpose and will controls.

Similarly with the forces of evil. Behind the calamities of life, especially sicknesses, were believed to stand wicked personalities, temporarily permitted to exercise their malign activity, which deliberately inflicted harm on men, wholly after the analogy of a malicious human being but with a greater and mysterious power. To them were ascribed not only temptation to sin but especially sickness and misfortune,—derangement of the mind, the nerves, and the various organs of the body.

But it is necessary to observe that this conception of the immediate control of the world by free personal wills, arbitrarily acting with reference to the immediate object to be attained, intervening directly to promote the good or to effect the harm of the individual, was not the whole of the ancient view, whether among the Israelites or others. The regular courses of the sun and moon and stars had attracted attention; and the science of astronomy had already been founded in Babylonia and Egypt. The courses of the seasons, the permanent physical properties of matter, the tendency of iron to sink, of oil to rise to the surface of water, and thousands of other observations of the working of what we call natural laws were of course known to the simplest mind, and used for all the operations of daily work. Without such a practical use of the uniformity of nature civilization would be impossible, and these were highly civilized peoples. And the

characteristic fact about the stage of thought from which the New Testament comes to us was just this inconsistency. In the religious interpretation of the world, which constitutes the philosophy of a devout people, the immediate activity of personal wills explained everything. Yet in the ordinary affairs of daily life vast numbers of things were known to show a stability and regularity which did not naturally or strongly suggest the voluntary adaptation of means to immediate ends by a divine person. For such voluntary adaptation (as distinguished from the mechanical uniformity of impersonal forces) can reveal itself only by fluctuation of method under changing conditions. When a machine adapts itself automatically to the different sizes of the objects which are fed into it, then we say that it is almost human.

These ancient people, then, had a simple view of the direct relation of facts to underlying spiritual forces, good and bad, a view in which they were not shaken (although they were sometimes perplexed) by the obvious fact that the usual operation of Nature was uniform. The outcome of this combination of two ways of looking at the world of creation was a natural one, as we all recognize. The uniform is familiar, we take it as a matter of course, it seems to belong to us. Only the poet or the theologian feels God in and behind uniformity. But occasionally we are startled out of our complacency by the inexplicable, which runs counter to our usual observation and knowledge. Then, if we share the fundamental theistic belief of the Jews, we are likely to exclaim, God is in this place! The bushes of the desert are customary objects of our horizon, and seem to require no special explanation, even though we are aware that they clothe the slopes of the mountain of God. It is the bush that burns with fire and is not consumed which impels us to put our shoes from off our feet as on holy ground. The inexplicable is instinctively recognized as supernatural, and, if it commend itself as good, is pronounced divine. Certain South Sea islanders first clearly recognized the direct activity of God in the missionary because in a time of drought he dug them a well, and by novel and inexplicable power brought water from the rock.

Of all this there are abundant illustrations in the Bible. The

unaccountable mood in a man was regularly thought of as due to a spirit, whether of jealousy or anger, of insanity or meekness. The spirit was a demon, if the mood was evil; if the mood was good, it was the Holy Spirit of God. Unusual powers of any kind, if apparently good, were interpreted as due to direct endowment from God. The tendency of popular religion was to see divine activity not mainly and predominantly in the regular working of God's law, but in the irregular, the unusual, the startling, the thing which had no analogy, which was not explained by the well-known forces, and for the production of which, therefore, the hand of God must be assumed.

This condition of thought is made very clear by many facts that come to us from the Apostolic Age. All the unusual powers of the church, whether powers of government or of healing, of preaching or of the meaningless speech under the influence of religious excitement called speaking with tongues, were ascribed to God because they were unusual. The more unusual the gifts, the more the possessors of them prided themselves on their possession. The more inexplicable they were, the more divine and the more valuable they were accounted.

Since this general habit of mind thus saw a miracle in every inexplicable beneficence, no reported event, however strange, could seem to it highly and necessarily improbable. For all the exceptional there was a recognized place in the system, and one natural and acceptable explanation. Today, beyond question, the common view does not easily find place for a miracle, and tends to deny the trustworthiness of many accounts of unusual events. What has caused the change? We, too, believe in spiritual forces, at least in those of God's activity, underlying and superior to phenomena, and we call the supreme spiritual Force a person. We use for Him the analogy of human will and find satisfaction in it. Under prevalent conceptions of the immanent working of God we see him in all phenomena of matter and force, of physical and psychic life. If God be infinite personal will and infinite love, if nothing is removed from the sphere of his activity, how can we set limits to his action? He is everywhere directly and immediately present; why should he not set to his hand where he will, and on occasion act with reference to im-

mediate ends, as well as usually proceed with steady regard to general principles? That was substantially the ancient view; why does the world of today find difficulty with it?

The most important thing to notice in such an inquiry is the comparative simplicity of ancient popular experience. The idea of God is the highest concept in the human mind, and it is vital in proportion as it can take up into itself all the elements of human experience. The ancient man—in the circles from which the Bible comes to us—had a relatively simple experience. In government he was acquainted only with a simple organization; an absolute monarch with his arbitrary or even capricious will embodied for him the whole substance of government. Of the modern conception of society as a complicated and delicate organism in which forces, hidden and subtle but all-powerful, unite in intricate combination to produce a mechanism that may easily be put out of order and work badly or refuse to work at all,—of all that, with its clear significance for our thought of God, the popular world of the time of the Bible had hardly an inkling. The writers of the Bible had never seen a great machine such as a loom or a printing machine, with its infinite complexity of parts, its superhuman power, its perfect adjustment to the inconceivably varied duties before it,—and, we may add, its capacity for being put out of gear by any exception to the orderly working for which it was designed. Moreover, although there was much travel, and foreign nations were well-known, yet the actual field before the mind in thinking of the world was small, and only a few neighboring peoples touched the popular imagination of the inhabitants of any country. And although the vast distances of the stars were evident, and their number countless as the sands of the sea, yet any adequate notion of the complex unity of the system of the sidereal universe, which necessarily brings home to us the uniformity of natural laws and forces, was lacking.

There are doubtless many causes that have brought about the temper of modern thought. The religious motive which makes us like to find God in the natural and uniform—provided it is beneficent—has played its part; and the germ of the modern movement was here when the Apostle Paul, who shared the fundamental conceptions of antiquity, yet rose above them and

insisted that not the bare inexplicable, but the useful and edifying, reveals itself by its inner character as divine. The interests of modern science also, and the constant and repeated verification which it uses and on which it depends, have done their great work. Philosophical reflection and analysis have carried to their logical outcome the conceptions of uniformity upon which, as we have seen, civilization rests, and which, in their elements and embryo, were not absent from ancient popular thought. All these influences have contributed, but I cannot help thinking that the greatest influence of all on the mind of the masses of men has been the complexity of modern experience of the world.

For the result of our acquaintance with complicated machinery and our experience of complex systems of laws and forces in society and nature has been to give the ordinary man of today a vivid and new apprehension of the significance and value to mankind of the uniformity of natural law, and a keen sense that in a system of such extreme complexity as the universe exceptions to regular laws would be dangerous in a high degree. To the ordinary man of today it is not agreeable to think that nature is controlled by a will which is itself affected by the pathos or the wickedness of individual instances. Such a conception seems to him to contradict the notion of a trustworthy organization.

All this directly influences the idea of God, and of what God is likely to do or to have done; and hence in the normal, the regular, the uniform, we in our time see God more clearly than in the exceptional and inexplicable. Miracles once belonged to the natural conception of God's working; but now, entirely apart from any intruding idea of a separation of God from the universe in which he has worked hitherto and still works, we do not find them natural to our conception of God and his nature. The failure of the ancient world to find any such difficulty with miracles as we feel was a part of the historical conditions, and spiritual religion had to express itself in those conditions and no others, if it expressed itself at all. That Christianity comes to us in the gospels in the dress of the first century is evidence not against but for the antiquity and trustworthiness of those precious records. A primitive Christianity in which miracles were doubted would be itself an object of critical suspicion.

III

It is doubtless true that from the theistic point of view the possibility of miracles cannot be denied. But such an abstract possibility is empty. What troubles us is not what God might have done or permitted, but what certain narratives of the New Testament say that he did do,—statements which seem to us, at first sight at least, improbable.

Before proceeding farther it is worth while to inquire what the considerations are which would probably lead us to accept such narratives of miracles as true. Under what conditions would they seem no longer improbable but probable?

Would the belief that the testimony is that of a perfectly honest eye-witness convince you that the stilling of the storm was actually accomplished by Jesus' word, that through the power of Jesus bread for the five thousand actually came into existence when it had not previously been existent? I hardly think so, permanently. If you doubt these narratives, you doubt them on grounds which no evidence can touch. That an honest eye-witness told the story would cause you to believe that probably something happened which he so interpreted. If two honest eye-witnesses agreed, you would be even more convinced of this, and would perhaps have materials for making your own guess as to what the real and perceived phenomena were which the eye-witnesses thought they understood. You might be led to admit your own ignorance, or to suppose a hitherto unknown set of facts (as such have been brought to our knowledge by the discovery of the X-rays, and of new elements in the atmosphere); but that you should believe what the writers believed, and what they thought themselves to be describing, would not be brought about even by the coincident testimony of several persons who were present. It would always be possible to contrive a different theory than theirs and so to account for the admitted facts, or at least to say that they must have been mistaken.

No, the real difficulty is that miracles do not seem to be in accord with the analogies of life as we know it, and this difficulty

can only be overcome in one of two ways. It may, first, be shown that there are analogies, perhaps little known, which are within our knowledge and partial comprehension, and which enable us to see the naturalness of these events. Automatic writing on a planchette used to seem half-supernatural, or actually to be the work of Satan and witchcraft; when it was brought into relation with countless analogous phenomena of abnormal and normal psychology, it lost both its improbability as fact, and also the uncanny sense of contact with another world which had made it both attractive and repellent. Wholly similar is the case of the speaking with tongues at Corinth. There is no difficulty in understanding it, or in accepting Paul's statements as perfectly trustworthy, now that we have abundant illustrations of like results of religious excitement, at many dates and in many parts of the world. To Paul it was a miracle; we find in it an unusual, but not an isolated nor an unclassified, natural phenomenon. The observation or discovery of analogies which link a miracle in with our regular experience at once relieves the improbability which had before oppressed us. But, of course, this at the same time transforms the nature of the event from the exhibition of the direct intervention of God to a normal but unusual example of the regular working of his almighty power.

Secondly, there is another kind of consideration which, if admissible, might—and to some minds actually does—relieve the improbability that attaches to the miraculous narratives of the gospels. It is the consideration of the fitness of such events to the special situation. The difficulty with miracles is that they do not seem to accord with the analogies of life as we know it. But in the given instance there might have been something in the conditions and circumstances which made life different from what we know. May it not be that we have failed to see the general difference of situation, and that this makes us blind to the substantial analogies which would enable us to find a place for these events in our whole system? The jewels of an Indian prince seem to us fabulous; yet we do not deny their existence, for the whole condition of his life is foreign to our experience. If there were four dimensions, the conditions of existence under them would be so altered that much of what now holds true in space would be

false. So with countless strange facts in history. If we could believe that an archangel had appeared to men, we should fully expect, and could easily believe, that he would show many powers which neither a man nor a great bird possesses. These attributes would be easily credible, because they would fit the situation. We should not ask for analogies from our own life, for in the nature of the case such analogies would not be at hand.

Many thoughtful modern Christians hold that here is to be found relief in the matter of the New Testament miracles. If, it is said, we believe in the Incarnation of the Son of God, that is the great miracle, and all minor miracles become fitting by virtue of that belief and lose the improbability which would otherwise attach to them. Faith in the Incarnation, it is said, carries with it such a view of the person of Jesus Christ that his miracles are no longer improbable, but are natural, appropriate, and easy to understand and believe.

Whether this consideration will give aid or not will depend on the conception of the meaning of the Incarnation which is held. Under some conceptions this contention will hold, under others it will not. The thorough-going conception of a docetic Christ, the apparition of a spiritual being made visible but devoid of real contact with the world, as some Christians and some half-christians of the earliest centuries frankly believed, will obviously make it easy to think that miracles of many sorts accompanied his appearance on earth. And a less extreme view, which yet makes its starting-point the idea of an intrusion from outside into human life, and sets divine and human over against each other in sharp contrast, conceiving of Christ as a man, indeed, but as in some sense an alien in human guise, will likewise permit with comparative readiness the belief in other coincident and subsidiary miracles. On the other hand a sincere belief in the Incarnation may start from the conception of God and man as one, and from the fact that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, made in all things like unto his brethren that he might succor them that are tempted and make propitiation for the sins of the people, one whom we have heard, we have seen with our eyes, we beheld, and our hands handled. To such a view the Incarnation is faith's interpretation of fact, not a fact which can be known or accepted with-

out religious faith; the dramatic story of its process is likely to seem the symbol or outward form of the reality, not its essence. This conception of the Incarnation is as genuine and reverent and profound as any other; but to it miracles are not specially congenial, nor, under such a view, does the belief that in Jesus Christ is to be seen the divine man who in his person brings to us God himself, relieve the difficulty of the miraculous narratives of the gospels,—where, after all, miracles are on the whole occasional and exceptional, not the ordinary and universal attendants and conditions of Jesus' mode of existence.

But this is not the place to discuss and answer these questions. No answer is possible apart from the general fundamental convictions of each individual, upon which his view in this matter will rest. What is here desired is to point out that, if a strictly miraculous character is ascribed to certain events reported in the gospel history, belief that those events actually took place does not, and cannot, rest on mere evidence, but necessarily depends on a general system of thought and in particular on our special view of the nature of the Incarnation.

IV

Without here attempting to examine in detail the narratives of New Testament miracles, or to introduce a comparison of the narratives of similar events, ancient and modern, outside the New Testament which throw light—and they do throw much light²—on certain classes of the New Testament miracles, we may approach the miracles of the New Testament by dividing them into three classes:

(1) First come those events reported as miracles which rest on good testimony (such testimony as for other than miraculous narratives would be deemed adequate), and which, by the analogy of our own knowledge, or the reports of credible witnesses, we are able to link in with other well-attested experience.

² Illuminating facts are to be found, for instance, in Harnack, *The Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*, and in P. Janet, *The Major Symptoms of Hysteria*.

It has already been said that such an attitude toward these miracles will remove them from the class of miracles proper and lead us to treat them as unusual or startling, but yet explicable and natural, occurrences. We may take as examples of this class of miracles some of the narratives of the Book of Acts, as for instance the raising by Paul from apparent death of Eutychus who fell out of the window, or the events at Malta where Paul was protected against the viper's bite, and the father of Publius cured of fever and dysentery. These are all told with the evident belief on the writer's part that they were miracles. Yet in the two latter instances the writer seems himself to have been present. Stories of this group are numerous, and should cause no difficulty. They relate to real and entirely credible events. All that is miraculous is the writer's interpretation of the phenomena, and this we are at liberty to accept or reject.

So, again, the cases of the cure of demoniacs, whether in gospels or Acts, find their full analogy in the many instances of the wholly similar exorcism of demons attested in early centuries by church fathers as well as by heathen like Celsus, and known also in modern times. Wherever—as in China today—demons are believed to take possession of men, there will be cases known of marvellous cures wrought not by medical skill but in one instance by the power of a great personality, in another by some radical change in the circumstances or inner state of the possessed. These were cases of mental and nervous derangement, and the cures were wrought by similar means to those to which these strange and subtle disorders have often yielded within the experience of careful modern observers.

Not unlike these are many of the other cases reported in the New Testament of sickness not specially called demoniacal. Well-attested instances in modern times present satisfactory parallels. At no time in the history of the world from that day to this has the stream of such cases failed. For we must recognize that the number of illnesses due in part or wholly to mental and nervous causes, and so in greater or less degree susceptible to mental and nervous influences, is enormous. The paralysis of hysteria is as actual as that of apoplexy, but it may be made to disappear by a variety of influences. Blindness, deafness, dumb-

ness, lameness, the withered hand, catalepsy, are all naturally ascribed to this cause. These hysterical affections are still common among the lower classes of our population. They are rarely seen in most physicians' private practice, but are frequent in the cases applying for relief at the hospitals of great cities. So many of the cures reported or referred to in the New Testament can be accounted for in this way that it is easy to believe that, if we could learn accurately all the circumstances of most of the others, we should find them to contradict nothing that we know in well-attested experience. The marvels of mediaeval Tours and modern Lourdes and hundreds of other places, and of Christian Science, are real; and they can be matched from abundant sober records of critical physicians.

Of course it is to be remembered that these narratives have come to us through reporters who believed these events to be due to the exercise of supernatural and divine power, and not to be in accordance with natural analogies. The stories are told in that spirit, and it may well be that under that conception details have crept in which are not true and which in reality could only be explained by assuming a miracle. It must be borne in mind that we have no scientific diagnosis of these cases, but only the general impression, perhaps of ignorant by-standers, perhaps of the evangelist himself; and that no careful investigation was, or could be, made. In many cases we are not in a position to know exactly what the disease was, still less to judge whether it could have been helped by the means employed. And there is always a good chance of some degree of mere exaggeration.

Ready analogies also enable us in a measure to understand visions (like those to Paul on his voyage to Rome), and manifestations of the Spirit in the bestowal of graces of prophecy, of powerful speech, of the gift of tongues. These things fall in perfectly with the world as we know it. They belong to somewhat unusual, but by no means to unreal, fields of human experience.

Into this class of miracles,—events which really happened and were honestly reported, which were believed by those who narrated them to be miracles, but which have for us sufficient analogy in experience to make them wholly credible, will fall the vast and overwhelming majority—nearly the whole—of the miracles

of the New Testament. The New Testament is full of miracles, but they are not mere legendary wonders, they are mainly such honest accounts of entirely real events as were naturally given by a generation which fully believed in miracles.

(2) A second class consists of certain miracles narrated by the same writers who have given us the accounts of the first class, just discussed, but in the case of which no satisfactory analogy from experience seems to exist, or to be possible. Such are the walking on the water, the feeding of the five thousand, the appearance of the dead from their graves at the crucifixion, the miraculous release of Peter from prison, the cursing of the fig-tree, and some others.

These events are doubted, not because of any defect in their attestation, but solely because they are miracles. With regard to them no single statement can be made. It is easy to suggest that as analogies from experience have been found for many strange events recorded in history, so others may be discovered for these, and the abstract possibility of this is not easy to deny. It is also possible in some cases to imagine how under the influence of a theological conception the story of a real event may have been completely transformed in the telling. And, doubtless, we must also be prepared to admit the possibility of some legends, even in the generally trustworthy narratives of our gospels. The point to be urged is that the number of these narratives is small, that they must be studied individually, and, in view of all that we have seen, that they do not discredit the record.

(3) A third class of miracles, also small, but important, presents different problems. They are those cases where the question about the evidence itself is complex, and the difficulty of the problem does not lie solely in the miraculous element of the narratives. Such are the miracles found in the Gospel of John, notably the wine at Cana and the raising of Lazarus. It cannot be said that the historical testimony here is as strong as it is for incidents recorded by Mark; and the whole character of the Fourth Gospel is an essential element in forming a judgment about these miracles. Only as we understand that profound writer's purpose and method can we tell what those narratives carry of underlying historical fact.

Here will also fall the two great miracles of the virgin birth of Jesus and his resurrection. Into the discussion of these we cannot enter. But it is important to notice that in both cases the evidence is complicated and not simple, and that the difficulties do not reside wholly in the miraculous elements of the story, and, further, that both of these relate to events partly outside the limits of this world of space and time.

The sum of the matter is familiar, and has been often stated. The theistic position in itself does not require, or even necessarily permit to the modern thinker, a belief in miracles. Such a belief must be a part of a special system of theological views, and only in that case can it be held with freedom and peace of mind. To ancient theistic thought it was entirely congenial, and when Christianity, the religion of the spirit, expressed itself in the historical conditions of the first century, those who remembered and recorded its history naturally and properly saw in many events the miraculous working of divine power. That they did so casts no discredit on the general trustworthiness of their work, where that is attested by other internal and external evidence. Their willingness to report miracles is no sign of credulity, but is only one phase of the whole intellectual system through the medium of which they viewed the facts. Miracles were at first arguments. They are so no longer, but therein they have only shared the fate of all arguments, for an effective argument is in the nature of the case related to current modes of thought and hence likely to prove of temporary validity. The gospel narratives of miracles are one of the historical modes through which spiritual Christianity reveals itself to us. They are to be treated like all the historical expressions of our religion, that is to say, understood historically, and approached as forms which can teach us much about underlying substance.

As expressions of truth, miraculous narratives are not to be taken as allegories, but from them we can yet learn the specific thought about God and Jesus Christ which, in its own historically conditioned way, primitive Christianity thus expressed. As to their value as statements of historical fact, we can often use them with confidence. Often, however, we must be content to leave

pressing questions undecided. We cannot know in every case what the facts were, nor how far the story rests on actual recollection, nor how or why it arose. This is true in all ancient history, and we have no right to ask for more certainty in the New Testament than elsewhere. Such willingness to admit that uncertain things are uncertain is essential if the modern world is to be convinced that the early history of Christianity is substantially true.

*DOES EVOLUTIONARY PHILOSOPHY OFFER ANY
CONSTRUCTIVE ARGUMENT FOR THE REALITY
OF GOD?*

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The doctrine of the evolution or gradual development of organisms has had a most interesting history in recent years. In speculative philosophy, as is well known, the evolutionary conception is by no means new. The work of Darwin and his immediate predecessors and successors has given it a definiteness, however, and a backing of facts which have since kept it in the forefront of thought.

Because it is a direct blow at arbitrary and supernaturalistic explanations and exalts orderliness as the supreme law of procedure, it has been deemed by many thinkers to be essentially atheistic and irreligious. Much of the early polemic literature raged about this point. Out of this debate gradually emerged the conclusion that the process of evolution and the theory of development do not contribute in any way, either favorably or unfavorably, to the solution of the question as to the possible existence of God, and to the validity of the higher spiritual aspirations of man. It has been realized that evolution can, in the nature of the case, have nothing to say as to ultimate origins, and it has therefore been concluded that it can neither be theistic nor atheistic, but must be merely agnostic. The view of the majority of thoughtful men on the subject today probably is, that the religious problems stand on the whole about where they did before the wide acceptance of the evolutionary doctrine; that religious views are, after all, purely a matter of philosophy, and as such take us back of the point where evolution must begin.

It has come to be frankly allowed that a man may be an evolutionist and at the same time believe in a theistic solution of the universe. Only in relatively recent years, however, is it appear-

ing that the evolutionary philosophy has something constructive to offer regarding the higher human qualities and the religious impulses.

In the mean time the fundamental principles of organic evolution have been applied to all departments of human knowledge and interests, with the result that the whole realm of knowledge has gained a significance and unity which it has never had under any other assumption. Our mental qualities and knowledge, our spiritual states and development, our habits, our social organization and customs, history, literature, religion, interpreted from the evolutionary point of view, receive a great illumination which is very satisfying to the rational quality in man. Such rational satisfaction is usually taken to mean truth, so far as we are able to measure truth. In the light of these facts it is desirable that we attempt to determine whether the doctrine of evolution and the scientific method can make any constructive contribution to the great religious questions of the ages, which are at bottom philosophical questions.

The most significant conclusions of the evolutionist are very simple, and of manifest truth. They are that organisms are plastic and variable; that some elements in the environment have great influence in modifying life and others have not; that many individuals and many types of organisms are eliminated because their variations are not in accordance with the needs of the organism as determined by the environment; that, in the long run, only those will persist, develop, and flourish whose structures and actions bring them into accordance with at least those factors of the environment which are of most moment to life. The result of this process must ultimately be a more or less close adjustment of the qualities of organisms to their surroundings. This adjustment, achieved by purely natural evolutionary processes, is called *adaptation*. Adaptation, in an evolutionary sense, means more than mere harmony, mere correspondence. It means that the environment is the moulding influence; that the organism is the thing moulded. It means that the course of evolution is, on last analysis, determined by the environment rather than by an internal arbitrary principle of development.

This principle of adaptation exalts the environment to its

proper place. Our philosophy has exalted the individual, forgetting that the present individual is the product of the environment working upon earlier simpler personal endowments; and so, back to the simplest point of beginning. It is necessary to exalt the individual so long as we are thinking primarily of the *interpreting* process. So soon as we begin to examine the process whereby the present interpreter has reached the point where he may interpret, and to discover why he may rightly interpret, it is uniformly found that greater and greater significance attaches to the action of the environment. This is the great contribution which modern biology has made to the philosophy of life:—while the environment alone may not produce life, all evolution must be in fundamental accordance with the potent realities in the environment; whatever furnishes the original impetus in organisms, the environment limits and guides the direction of progress.

We mean by environment, broadly, all the conditions, things, forces, and influences which act in such a way upon organisms as to cause them to respond by motion, by growth, or by any change which makes the organism different from what it would have been without their action. Through the continuous interaction of organism and environment, the organisms must of necessity become fitted or adjusted to the vital factors of the surroundings. The organism thus comes to have the environment, in a way, worked into the texture of its personality. Its personality must accord with the potent realities. No important external force or agency can long influence life without living things coming to show in their character the particular results of this element. On the other hand, no quality in organisms will arise, persist, become generally prevalent, and be the subject of further evolutionary development, unless it is in some way related to an influence in the total environment of the organism adequate to produce or preserve that particular personal quality, by making it useful.

The genuine evolutionist of the present day must then be a realist, and he cannot be far removed from the realism of the plain man, who is neither scientist nor philosopher, but a mixture of both. No evolutionist has ever been able to escape the recognition that all evolution involves the interaction of two equally

genuine sets of elements,—the internal and the external. This is just as true when he considers the evolution of forms lower than himself as when he considers his own personal evolution. He cannot escape the conclusion, as an evolutionist, that both his *selfhood* and the environing *not-self* are equally real, and furthermore, for all practical purposes, essentially as they appear to be. No consistent general evolutionist can deny the reality of the self nor the consciousness of self; the reality of the environment nor the consciousness of the environment. The selfhood of the self and the genuineness of things-in-themselves are exactly upon the same evolutionary plane. Theoretically, as judgments, they are of equal validity to the evolutionist. Existentially, he has no ground for giving one a standing above the other. In the denial of either he necessarily negatives the whole scientific procedure, and equally all that knowledge, whether of the self or of the not-self, by which he makes the denial.

It is entirely competent for the idealist, who considers the seeming external reality to be merely states of consciousness, to deny that there is any genuine evolution,—however impossible it would be for him to explain the progressive character of even those mental states which he recognizes; but it is wholly impossible for the consistent believer in the doctrine of organic evolution not to recognize both the self and the not-self, the individual and his environment, and the indissoluble and efficient relation which exists between the two.

Assuming, then, that things internal and external to the self are essentially as they seem to be; that the basal principle of organic evolution is correct,—namely, that the environment has the power of guiding evolution through its selective effect upon the responses, the desires, and the unconscious and conscious choices of organisms; and that all organic qualities therefore come to be marks and indices of certain real and adequate environmental agencies whose long action has made the qualities of survival value,—the scientist has succeeded in finding a satisfying reason *why* things should appear to the individual essentially as they are. No other form of philosophy has even remotely accomplished this in such a way as to satisfy reason.

The evolutionist does not—or should not—claim that the principle of natural organic evolution really solves any ultimate philosophical difficulty. It cannot explain the ultimate origin of anything. It must allow in the first beginning of which it can take any cognizance all the possibilities of the very latest manifestations. It cannot explain the fact of causation which it assumes. It cannot directly predicate or deny teleology, except by analogy. It does, however, aid tremendously in illuminating processes and relations,—which are after all our only known clew to the meaning of our personality and the validity of the whole process whereby that personality receives or rejects a presentation as true.

The present qualities of man, including his power of interpreting the universe, must have belonged to his remotest ancestor, or must have come by the interaction of the whole succession of personalities and the whole efficient environment. If they were originally in the individual himself, evolutionary philosophy throws no more light on the situation than the most arbitrary supernaturalistic interpretation. If the adjustment is the result of the compelling effect of the environment upon a plastic organism, and organisms come progressively into better and better adaptation to all the vital forces of the environment, the organism becomes, in all its basal structures, instincts, processes, habits, ideals, a progressive revelation of the reality and nature of the environment.

If, then, man is, in his whole nature, physical, mental, social, moral, and spiritual, the product of the evolutionary process; if the fundamental physiological qualities have gradually given rise, by perfection and selection, to sensation and ordered response; if from these consciousness has gradually come, bringing in its train memory, desire, reason, purpose, choice; if, from the simplest social relations, the sense of kind—using the personal qualities mentioned above—has produced the present social instincts, organization, codes, and moral standards; if his spiritual and religious nature, impulses, ideals, and standards are the evolutionary outcome of the synthesis and development of all the lower qualities; if at every step of this evolution the direction of it is controlled by the efficient power of the environmental reali-

ties,—then, all of these qualities—which can be shown to be generally possessed by mankind, to be persistent and even increasing in their efficient effect upon conduct, and to be of large survival utility—are adaptations to something *real* in the environment and *adequate* to have given them their value. The environment of organisms, in order to produce or preserve organic qualities, must be made up of factors of a grade and of a significance to life which would enable it to do this work.

For example, tactile stimuli in the environment could never have given rise to the eye nor to its sense of sight. Only the existence of light as an environmental reality having a profound influence upon life could account for the origin and useful persistence of the eye. On the other hand, light waves could never have produced, nor have selected after it had arisen, the sense of thirst nor the desire for water. Only the real existence of water, as a constant and powerful modifier of life, can produce and develop the racial thirst for water. None of the physical agents, alone or in conjunction, could have given rise to the consciousness of self. Only the reality of the self, as separate from and yet related to these agents, could have produced it. Nothing but the reality of organisms, like the self and yet different from the self, and the actual contacts between the self and them, could have produced a consciousness of kind and through it have given rise to the whole mass of social instincts of the individual. Nothing but actual reproduction and actual offspring could produce parental care of offspring and the organization of the home and all the elements of sympathy and sacrifice related thereto. None of these things mentioned could account for the power of reasoning, the sense of orderliness, the logical faculty in man, on an evolutionary assumption. Nothing short of real orderliness, efficient in its conditioning power upon life and conduct, could so control evolution as to produce a sense of orderliness, and that respect for it in the very structure of personality which we call reason. If the environment determines the course of evolution and thus has a vetoing power on organic possessions, human reason and human conclusions must, in the long run, be in accordance with truth. The very ground-structure of human reason is the reality and efficient orderliness of those environmental proc-

esses which have made reason and inference a means of survival and success.

Idealistic philosophy has long said, "There is a seeming harmony between an external objective world and personal consciousness as related to that world; but there is no possible way of knowing whether there is such a real world external to consciousness; nor, if there is such a world, can its real nature be known." Evolution says that if consciousness in man is an evolutionary product, actually developed by the action of an external world upon developing consciousness in organisms, such correspondence is inevitable and necessarily appreciable, and that the nature of this real environment must necessarily come, sooner or later, and come correctly into the ken of that consciousness.

Idealistic philosophy says, "There seems to be real and adequate causation. It seems to be true that certain conditions actually produce certain other conditions." But philosophy allows the question, "Is this anything more than a sequence? Is there necessarily any causation?" And it is unable to answer the question. Evolution says, "The idea of causation is itself a product. It is the result of race experience. It is unquestionably of survival value as a guide to conduct. It is therefore a genuine adaptation, and as such is an expression of reality. It has an adjusting value upon conduct; but it could not adjust an organism and make it successful in a situation which did not really exist."

Similarly, philosophy says, "There seems to be a *sanity* about the general order of things. It commends itself to the human mind as reasonable in its broad outlines. It in some degree satisfies." But philosophy also says, "This may be only seeming; of course the mind will approve the order of a world of its own creating." The evolutionist says, "The world appears as it does because it has been acting upon the developing organisms so long and so powerfully that the nature of the organism reflects the history of the past; and thus the mind approves the universe because it is really a product of that universe and could not possibly have done otherwise and persist." The apparent sanity of the world-order is necessarily a result of an evolutionary process in which the evolving object becomes the interpreter of an effective environment.

This is a very different proposition from the philosophically barren "ontological" argument, which predicates the existence of objects of thought, including God, upon the mere idea of them. Evolution predicates the reality of environmental factors upon the development, the utility, the persistence, and the increase of elements of personality which, if of evolutionary origin, must have had adequate environmental conditions to give them point. The mere ability to formulate an idea does not make it true; but the practical utility of such an idea resulting in its general acceptance and its replacement of earlier and simpler ideas, its persistence in practice, its later development coupled with increasing utility,—indicate a harmony with reality and an existential efficiency in that reality. Philosophically, we are back of the point where we started.

The evolutionist cannot raise a question as to the sanity, from a human point of view, of the world-order; he deals with the reasons for that sanity. To the evolutionist, then, the ground of belief in the reality of the external universe and the essential sanity of the relation of the individual to that universe is found not by way of our belief in an arbitrarily preëstablished harmony; nor by way of innate ideas and intuitions; nor through a supernaturally acquired belief in a God who would not deceive us, but by way of, and because of, the organic codification of race experience in the persistent qualities of organisms,—because of the moulding effect of the environment upon every organism which presents itself as a candidate for selection. All human qualities which enable man to succeed by modifying conduct *must* be in accord with real and potent factors of the environment.

These conclusions are the commonplaces of our present evolutionary philosophy. They furnish a rationally satisfying unification of the processes and qualities mentioned. Are we in a position to apply the principles to the realm of ethics, morals, and religion? That depends wholly upon whether these latter qualities are evolutionary derivatives from those qualities which lie below and are known to be in adaptation to reality. Unless in some way consciousness of God and moral obligation are derived from consciousness of self, of environment, of kind, and of ideas related to these; unless religious instincts, habits, ideas,

and ideals are organically related to the rational and social instincts, ideas, and standards, as these in turn are related to the physiological, we are not at liberty to say that our study of natural history throws any light upon the higher human possessions. In that case, there is no analogy. If they have been created *de novo*, they may be, so far as we know, purely arbitrary, unrelated, and unreal.

According to the non-evolutionary philosophy the religious and moral qualities get their value and claim because of their supposed *separateness* from the other elements of our nature. To the evolutionist the evidences of the connection—the inseparable relation of the religious and spiritual to the social, mental, and physiological are the *ground* of our valuation and interpretation of the religious qualities. If religion and morals are a part of the series of evolutionary qualities, their interpretation is not arbitrary, but is, by the strongest possible analogy, the analogy of life itself, as really a fundamental adaptation to genuine, external, and adequate factors as is any other human quality.

Applying, then, our analogy to the moral and religious qualities, impulses, desires, ideas, and modes of consciousness, the following may be said of them:

1. They have had, and do have, much power in moulding conduct, through their influence on choice. They bring about the substitution of unselfish for selfish behavior; of sacrifice for struggle; of internal control, by standards, for external compulsion or indulgence; of action under sense of responsibility to God for responsibility to man or for irresponsibility; of "I ought" for "I desire" or "I am accustomed."

2. If they chronically modify individual conduct, they must influence evolution.

3. They could not possibly arise, persist, and become the subject of evolution (as they undoubtedly have become) unless they modified evolution in some favorable direction,—that is, unless they were useful to the organism.

4. They could not influence evolution favorably (as they undoubtedly have done) except by bringing the organism into what is, on the whole, more perfect or more catholic adjustment to the more important elements of its environment.

5. The possession of these qualities would not have brought the human organism into an adjustment to its total environment more perfect and satisfactory than that possessed by the organisms that had not achieved these characters, unless there were real and genuine factors in the environment which would make these new and high qualities of distinct evolutionary value.

6. Furthermore, in order to make the religious qualities of individuals of survival value to organisms, there must be elements in the total environment of a *grade* to produce and select the religious and spiritual elements of personality. No new impetus is gained by evolutionary philosophy. Physical evolution cannot carry the organism into an intellectual realm unless the intellectual permeates or accompanies the physical in the environment. Causation must be adequate. Only spiritual reality can give rise, in an evolved organism, to spiritual qualities of personality.

7. In the absence of the power directly to measure, in terms of the science based upon the physical senses, the external reality of a moral order of right and wrong; the real existence of sympathy and self-sacrifice as an integral part of the universe-order; the validity of the spiritual forces; the existence of God, and the like,—the principle of adaptation allows us to say, by the profoundest analogy which we are yet capable of applying to life, that nothing but the really immanent God could make behavior based on the consciousness of God of value in the development of human life; nothing but real right and wrong, outside of us, could rouse the consciousness of standards, which we call conscience; nothing but spiritual reality could make the spiritual nature an adaptation. Were intelligence, morality, righteousness, love, and God not at the heart of the universe and fundamentally potent in modifying and guiding life, they, or ideas of them, could not have appeared and have persisted in man as the crowning glory both of the development of life and of self-appreciation.

The evidential value of this line of argument—when applied to this new realm in which consciousness, reason, conscience, sense of God, and all the higher and more recent personal and social emotions and desires and responses play their part—is to

the effect that God is the most important factor in the total human environment; that he is constantly and effectively present in every part of it; that there is some way in which the personality of God is coming to make itself more perfectly and consciously felt by the human individual; that, while God has always been at the heart of the total environment, the organism had to reach a certain stage of personality himself before the sense of God as a personality could emerge; that, as the physical environment is mirrored in the nature of organisms, so the power and nature of God are being progressively mirrored—and for exactly the same reasons—in the nature of man. This is the evolutionary explanation of the deep philosophy which says that God made man in his own image. It is the ground for the hope that we shall be like him when we see him as he is. Evolution is thus a continuous self-revelation of God to man; a continuous and progressive incarnation of the environment, and hence of God as the dominant factor in the environment, in man.

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